

WHAT DO EPISCOPALIANS BELIEVE?

ST. PHILIP'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

INQUIRERS' CLASS

SESSION 2: APRIL 28, 2022

OPENING PRAYER: O GRACIOUS LIGHT *PHOS HILARON*

O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.



THE VIA MEDIA “MIDDLE WAY” & THE ELIZABETHAN SETTLEMENT

DOOR #1

DOOR #3

DOOR #2

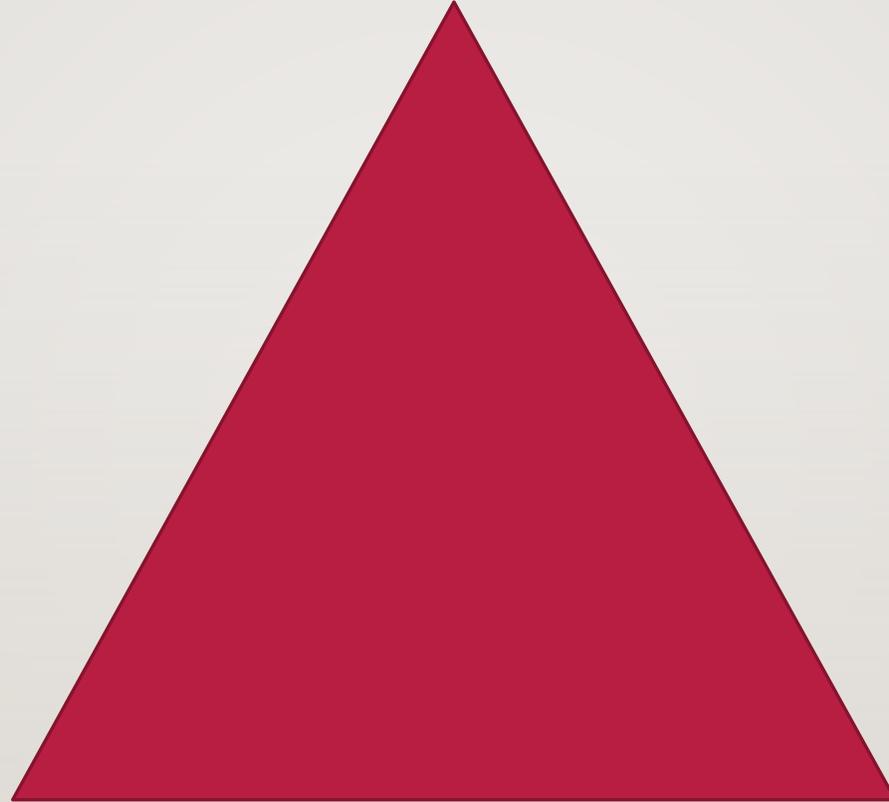


ROMAN CATHOLIC

ANGLICAN

PROTESTANT

SCRIPTURE



TRADITION

REASON

Richard Hooker:

The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity



SCRIPTURE

“Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought necessary or requisite to salvation” (39 Articles)

- No mention of inerrancy, infallibility or any of the other fundamentalist ideas of the 19th and 20th centuries.
- Instead Scripture is the foundation upon which the authority of the church rests and read in light of the other two legs of the tripod.

TRADITION

Creeds

Sacraments

Threefold order of ministry:
Bishops, Priests, Deacons

Apostolic Succession

REASON

- “Sundry things may lawfully be done in the Church, so as they be not done against the Scripture, although no Scripture do command them; but the Church only following the light of reason judge them to be in discretion meet. (*Laws III.2*).” Richard Hooker
- Scripture needs to be understood in the light of reason.
- Tradition needs to be developed from that reasonable interpretation of Scripture and itself subject to reason.
- To be a Christian should be to embrace science and all the insights it brings.

THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES

- Historic principles established by the Church of England at the Reformation
- Preoccupied with our differences from the Roman Catholic Church and Puritans
- You can read a version in the Historical Documents section at the back of our Prayer Book (p. 867)



THE EPISCOPAL CATECHISM OR “OUTLINE OF THE FAITH” (BCP, P. 845)

- A teaching guide to the core beliefs of the Episcopal Church
- For example:

Q. What is Confirmation?

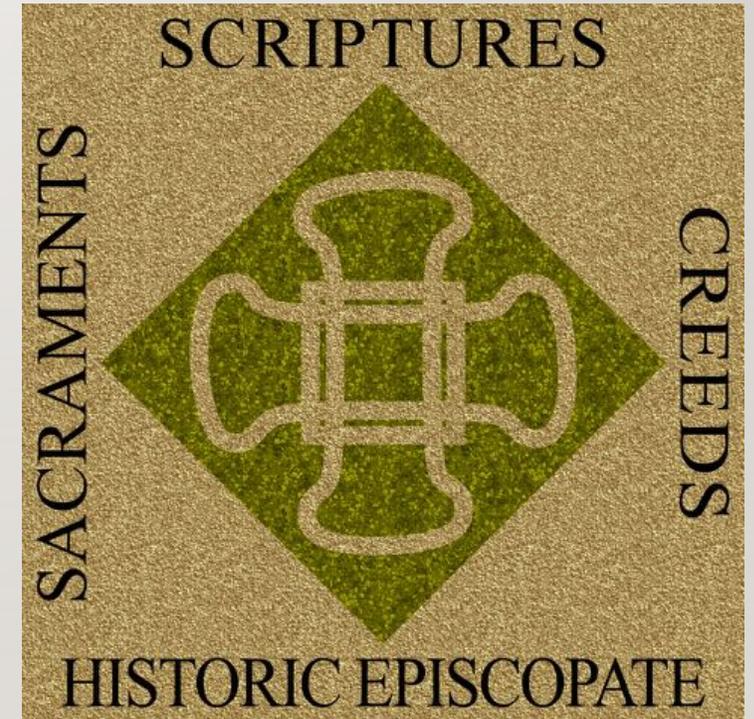
A. Confirmation is the rite in which we express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.

CHICAGO-LAMBETH QUADRILATERAL (BCP, P. 876) 1886, 1888

1. Our earnest desire that the Savior's prayer, "That we all may be one," may, in its deepest and truest sense, be speedily fulfilled;
2. That we believe that all who have been duly baptized with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, are members of the Holy Catholic Church.
3. That in all things of human ordering or human choice, relating to modes of worship and discipline, or to traditional customs, this Church is ready in the spirit of love and humility to forego all preferences of her own;
4. That this Church does not seek to absorb other Communion, but rather, co-operating with them on the basis of a common Faith and Order, to discountenance schism, to heal the wounds of the Body of Christ, and to promote the charity which is the chief of Christian graces and the visible manifestation of Christ to the world.

CHICAGO-LAMBETH QUADRILATERAL NON-NEGOTIABLES

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God.
2. The Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian Faith.
3. The two Sacraments--Baptism and the Supper of the Lord--ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
4. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.



LEX ORANDI, LEX CREDENDI “PRAYING SHAPES BELIEVING”

- Our theology is embedded in and formed by our worship
- Book of Common Prayer itself is the best symbol of our unity and theology
- The BCP is adopted by and can only be revised by two consecutive sessions of the General Convention (hence the 1976/1979 Prayer Book)
- Baptismal Covenant is a summary of our faith and practice
- The words of the hymns in our official Hymnal 1982 must be approved by General Convention
- General Convention has approved supplements to the Prayer Book and has allowed other musical resources to be used.

THE CHURCH & SOCIAL ISSUES

- So what about social issues—what does the church teach or believe about...
 - Divorce and remarriage
 - Homosexuality
 - Euthanasia
 - Racism and social justice
- Official policy gets decided at General Convention
 - House of Bishops and House of Deputies must agree on legislation
- In between General Conventions, there can be statements by:
 - Executive Council
 - Presiding Bishop
 - Local Bishops

CATHOLIC HIERARCHY + REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Province V



- Parishes elect delegates to diocesan convention
- Dioceses elect deputies to General Convention
- Bishops are elected by diocesan convention
- Parish clergy are selected by the local congregation and must be approved by the diocesan bishop

Episcopal Church

Presiding Bishop &
General Convention
Executive Council, etc.

*Provinces –
Groupings of dioceses by geography*

Diocese

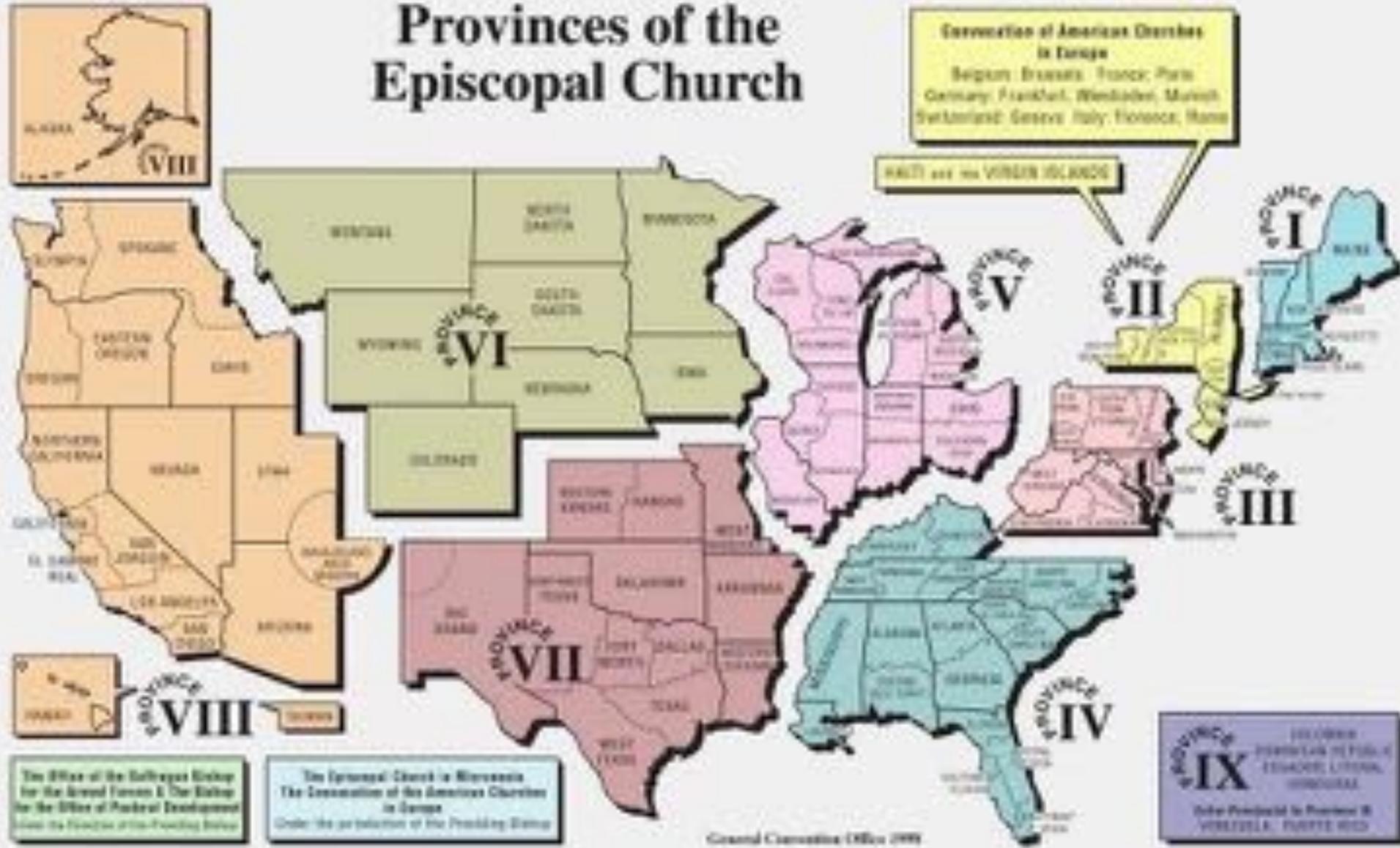
Bishop &
Diocesan Convention
Council, Standing Committee

*Deaneries –
Groupings of congregations by geography*

Local Congregation

Rector, Wardens, & Vestry

Provinces of the Episcopal Church



General Convention 1999

SAMPLE ISSUE: APPLYING ANGLICAN PRINCIPLES

- What does Scripture say? How do we understand Scripture in its historical context and how might we apply it to today?
- What does Tradition say? How has the church dealt with this issue in the past? Is there clear guidance in the creeds or worship practices of the church through the centuries? How have they changed, if at all?
- What does Reason say? What are the arguments from science, or logic, or from our own common lived experience?
- What does General Convention or the diocesan convention say?
- What does our bishop say?