

CHURCH SOCIETY DECLARATION

We who subscribe to this Declaration bind ourselves together in fellowship to uphold, defend and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the doctrine of the Church of England.

We affirm the definition of this doctrine that is set out in Canon A5 as follows:

The doctrine of the Church of England is grounded in the Holy Scriptures, and in such teachings of the ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church as are agreeable to the said Scriptures. In particular such doctrine is to be found in the 39 Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordinal.

Specifically, we lay emphasis on the following:

1. The triune personhood of God as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the historical incarnation of the Son of God through the Virgin Mary.
2. The substitutionary sin-bearing death, bodily resurrection, present heavenly reign, and future return to judgement of Jesus Christ the incarnate Son.
3. The universality of sin and the corruption of every aspect of human nature, the justification of sinners by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, and their supernatural regeneration and new life through the Holy Spirit.
4. The calling of the Church and of all Christian people to a life of holiness and prayer according to the Scriptures.
5. The primacy of evangelism and nurture in each local church's task of setting forth the kingdom of God.
6. The significance of personal present repentance and faith as determining eternal destiny.
7. The finality of God's revelation in Jesus Christ and the uniqueness of his ministry as our prophet, priest and king, and the only Saviour of sinners.
8. The infallibility and supreme authority of "God's Word written" and its clarity and sufficiency for the resolving of disputes about Christian faith and life. (See Article 20)

Our understanding of God's way of life for his people includes:

- a. The special responsibility of ordained leaders (with reference to the Ordinal) within the every-member ministry of the body of Christ.
- b. The gifting and distinctive calling of women to minister in word and deed within the church.
- c. The Scriptural and historic pattern of male spiritual leadership within the family and the church.

- d. The vital importance of monogamous, heterosexual, life-long marriage for the care and nurture of children, and the well being of human society.
- e. The rightness of sexual activity only within, and the wrongness of such activity outside, monogamous, heterosexual marriage.
- f. The urgent need for decentralisation at national, diocesan and deanery level, and the need radically to reform the present shape of episcopacy and pastoral discipline, to enable local churches to minister more effectively.