



Orthodoxy vs. Episcopalianism

Background

- The Episcopal Church is the official name of the Province of the Anglican Communion in the United States.
- The Anglican Church traces its origins to the English Reformation in the Sixteenth Century. Henry VIII rejected the authority of the Catholic Pope, broke with Rome, and formed the Church of England in 1534, though most of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church remained.
- Under the next king, Edward VI (1547-1553), Archbishop Thomas Cranmer introduced into the Anglican Church thorough reform in both doctrine and practice.
- When Edward died, Queen Mary I (1553-1558), attempted to forcibly return England to Roman Catholicism.
- Apart from the time of England's Civil War and Commonwealth Period (1643-1660), Anglican theology has been the official theology of the Church of England.

Background

- The first Anglican service in America was held in 1579 in what is now San Francisco. An Anglican chaplain was present at Jamestown, VA, in 1607.
- Prior to the Revolutionary War, Anglicans were numerous, especially in the Maryland and Virginian colonies. Both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were Anglicans.
- After the War (in 1783, 1789), Anglicans chose a new name, “The Protestant Episcopal Church,” and reorganized to distance themselves from England and to adapt to the American scene.
- Today it is divided into nine provinces and has extra-territorial dioceses in Taiwan, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Europe.

Background

- The Episcopal Church considers itself a middle way between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.
- It was active in the Social Gospel movement of the late nineteenth century and since the 1960s and 1970s has played a leading role in the progressive and liberal movements in church and secular politics.
- In its resolutions on secular issues the Episcopal Church has taken both sides on the abortion debate, opposed the death penalty, and supported affirmative action and the civil rights movement.

Major Differences

- Ordination of Women
- Role of Homosexuals
- Worship & Liturgy
- Doctrine & Sacraments



Ordination of Women

- In July 1976, after much heated debate, the 72nd General Convention in Philadelphia passed a resolution declaring that "no one shall be denied access" to ordination into the three orders of ministry: as deacons, priests or bishops, on the basis of their sex.
- One bishop, Rev. Jack Iker of Fort Worth, said that he planned to undertake "*active resistance to the directive...I cannot compromise my conscience because I have serious theological reservations.*" He decided to continue to refuse to ordain women, referring them to another diocese instead.

Ordination of Women

- In 1997, only 4 Episcopal diocese still refused to ordain women
- By 2002, approximately one in four Episcopal clergy was female
- In 2004, the drive for full access to ordination by women within the Episcopal Church, USA was almost complete. Only three of the 100 domestic dioceses still refused to ordain women.

Ordination of Women

- In June 2006, the Right Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori, Bishop of the Diocese of Nevada, was elected the 26th Presiding Bishop-elect of the Episcopal Church in the USA. This places her at the highest level of power in the Anglican Communion.
- Ten other primates of the Anglican communion have stated that they do not recognize Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori as a primate.
- In addition, eight American dioceses have rejected her authority and have asked the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams to assign them another national leader.

Ordination of Women objections

- HH Pope Shenouda III gives examples of many admirable women, but none of any woman who ever held the office of priest.
- In the Old Testament, God chose His priests from the sons of Levi.
- In the New Testament, although women worked in the service, Our Lord chose men for the establishment and continuation of the new order of priesthood.

Ordination of Women objections

- Of all the female righteous or martyrs, no woman is to have the office of priest, because it is not in God's good will for them to do so. Each of God's children has a distinct calling, role, and purpose.
- "Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness..." (Ephesians 4:1-6).
- 1 Corinthians 14:34, "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says."

Ordination of Women objections

- 1 Timothy 2:10-14, "But, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."
- St. Paul did not mean to belittle women nor their role in the church but wanted them to have a role that is more appropriate to their nature.
- St. Paul did not deny the great role of St. Timothy's grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice in teaching him the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim 3:15).

Ordination of Women objections

- St. Paul did not ignore Priscilla and the role she had played with her husband in their service to others in many countries; and how they led Apollos to the knowledge of truth (Act 18:26).
- He also commends Phoebe, the servant of the church in Cenchrea, for her help to many (Rom 16:12).
- Some godly women were simple, like Jochebed, the mother of Moses, Aaron the Priest, and Miriam the Prophetess, or Hannah, the mother of Samuel.
- Some were prominent such as Queen Esther, Deborah the Judge, and Anna the Prophetess.

Role of Homosexuals

- The Episcopal Church affirmed at the 1976 General Convention (GC) that homosexuals are "children of God" who deserve acceptance and pastoral care from the church.
- It also called for homosexual persons to have equal protection under secular law. This was reaffirmed in 1982.
- In 1994, the GC determined that church membership would not be determined on "marital status, sex, or sexual orientation".
- The GC also discourages the use of reparative therapy to "change" homosexuals into heterosexuals.

Role of Homosexuals

- Despite these affirmations of gay rights, the GC affirmed in 1991 that "physical sexual expression" is only appropriate within the monogamous, lifelong "union of husband and wife."
- Although some dioceses within ECUSA bless same-sex unions, the church as a whole does not.
- The first openly gay priest, Robert Williams, was ordained by Bishop John Shelby Spong in 1989.
- The next year Barry Stopfel was ordained a deacon by Bishop Spong's assistant, Walter Righter. Because Stopfel was not celibate, this resulted in a trial under canon law. The church court dismissed the charges on May 15, 1996, stating that "no clear doctrine" prohibits ordaining a gay or lesbian person in a committed relationship.

Role of Homosexuals

- The first openly homosexual bishop, Gene Robinson, was elected on June 7, 2003 at St. Paul's Church in Concord, New Hampshire.
- Robinson was consecrated on November 2, 2003 in the presence of Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold and 47 bishops.
- Since the ratification of Robinson as bishop, some clergy and lay members have left the Episcopal Church. In October 2003, an emergency meeting of the Anglican primates (the heads of the Anglican Communion's 38 member churches) was convened. The meeting's final communique included the warning that if Robinson's consecration proceeded, it would "tear the fabric of the communion at its deepest level."
- Defenders of the ordination responded that, "a person living in a same gender union may be considered eligible to lead the flock of Christ."

Role of Homosexuals objections

- As Christians, we base our faith and beliefs on the Holy Bible, which is the inspired Word of God. The Holy Bible teaches us that "But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female'" (Mk 10:6).
- Sexual expression is permitted only within marriage, between man and woman, male and female. Anything else is an abnormality and against nature.

Role of Homosexuals objections

- God condemns homosexuality. In the Old Testament, homosexuality was considered a sin, an abomination a capital offense, that is, punishable by death. "If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them" (Lev 20:13).
- "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination" (Lev 18:22).

Role of Homosexuals objections

- The New Testament considers homosexuality as depraved passion, "For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due" (Rom 1:26-27).

Role of Homosexuals objections

- The Holy Bible is clear, homosexuals will not enter the kingdom of heaven, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor 6:9-10).

Worship & Liturgy

- Varying degrees of liturgical practice prevail within the church, and one finds a variety of worship styles:
 - Traditional hymns and anthems
 - Praise and worship music
 - Anglican chant
 - Liturgical dance
 - Charismatic hand movements
 - Vested clergy, and clergy in street clothing
 - Book of Common Prayer

Worship & Liturgy

- Three main types of worship services:
 - High Church
 - Low Church
 - Broad Church

Worship & Liturgy

- High Church
 - Ritually inclined towards embellishments such as incense, formal hymns, and a higher degree of ceremony.
 - In addition to clergy vesting in albs, stoles and chasubles, the lay assistants may also be vested in cassock and surplice. The sung eucharist (celebrated with singing) tends to be emphasized in High Church congregations, with Anglo-Catholic congregations and celebrants using sung services almost exclusively.

Worship & Liturgy



A deacon
wearing an alb
and cincture
with a purple
stole.



A modern
chasuble



An Anglican
priest wearing a
single-breasted
cassock.



An Anglican
priest wearing a
cassock,
academic hood,
surplice, and
tippet as his
choir dress.

Worship & Liturgy

- Low Church
 - Simpler service that may incorporate other elements such as informal praise and worship music.
 - "Low" congregations tend towards a more "traditional Protestant" outlook.
 - The spoken eucharist (does not involve singing) tends to be emphasized in Low Church congregations.

Worship & Liturgy

- Broad Church
 - Incorporates elements of both low church and high church.

Worship & Liturgy

- Eucharist

- In the Eucharist or Holy Communion service, the Book of Common Prayer specifies that bread and wine are consecrated for consumption by the people.
- Those wishing for whatever reason to avoid alcohol are free to decline the cup.
- A Eucharist can be part of a wedding to celebrate a sacramental marriage and of a funeral as a thank offering (sacrifice) to God and for the comfort of the mourners.

Worship & Liturgy

- Veneration of saints
 - The veneration of saints is practiced by the Episcopal Church
 - The usage of the term "saint" is similar to Catholic and Orthodox traditions. Those inclined to the Anglo-Catholic traditions may explicitly invoke saints as intercessors in prayer.

Doctrine & Sacraments

- Jesus Christ is fully human and fully God.
- He died and was resurrected from the dead
- Jesus provides the way of eternal life for those who believe
- God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit, are one God, and are called the Holy Trinity, "Three and yet one"
- The Old and New Testaments of the Bible were written by people "under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit".
- The Apocrypha are additional books that are used in Christian worship, but not for the formation of doctrine.
- The two great and necessary sacraments are Holy Baptism and Holy Eucharist
- Other sacramental rites are confirmation, ordination, marriage, reconciliation of a penitent, and unction.
- Belief in heaven, hell, and Jesus' return in glory.

Conclusion

- While the Episcopal church shares many common beliefs and practices of an apostolic church, it has been plagued with social pressures to conform to a liberal society and has departed from the original faith