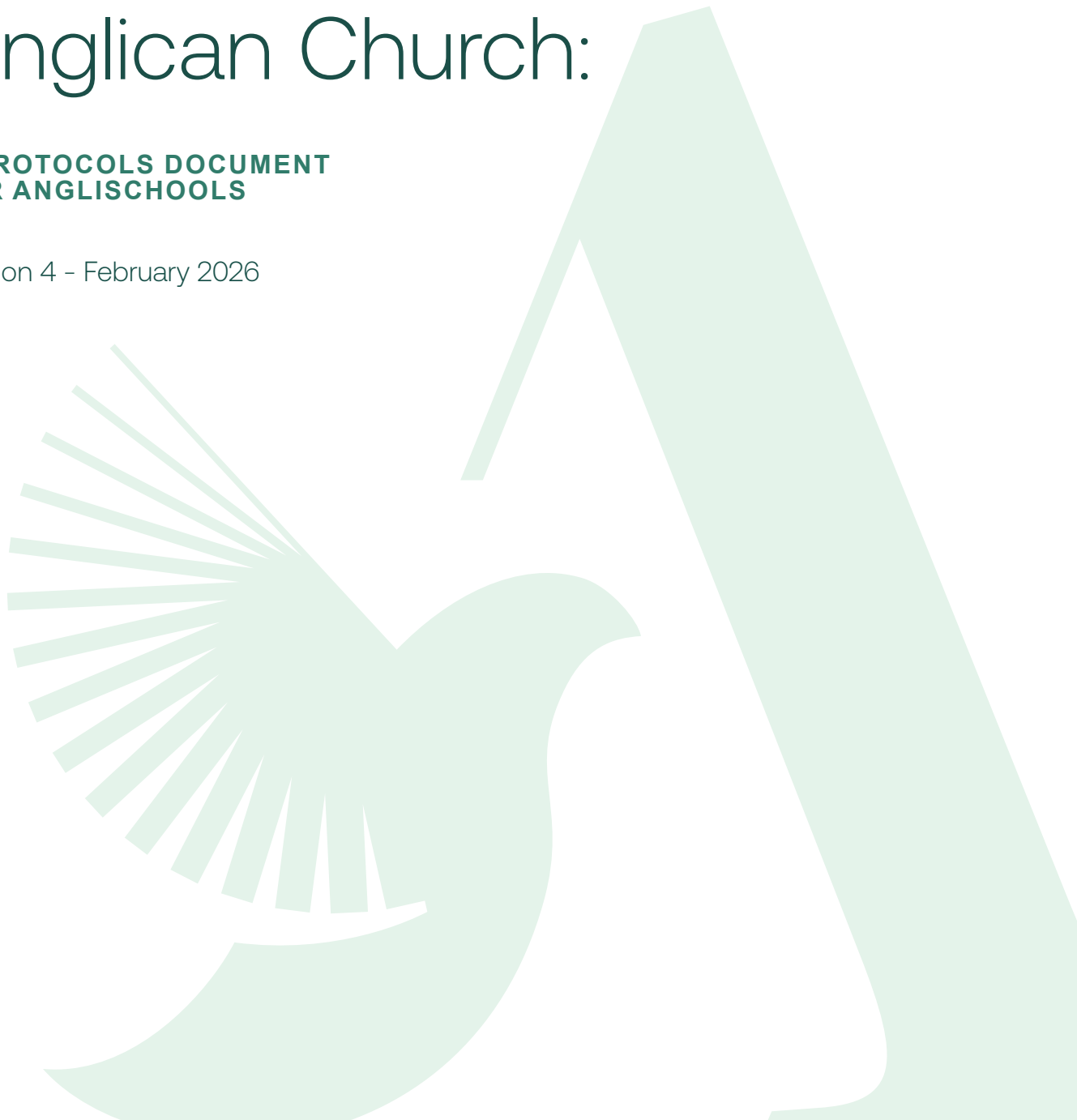




An ABC of the Anglican Church:

**A PROTOCOLS DOCUMENT
FOR ANGLISCHOOLS**

Version 4 - February 2026



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Introduction

The Anglican Church developed from the practices, liturgy, and identity of the Church of England following the Reformation in Europe and Britain in the mid-sixteenth century. Adherents of Anglicanism are called Anglicans, and the majority are members of the international Anglican Communion, which forms the third-largest Christian communion in the world, after the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. Anglicans famously base their Christian faith on a balance between Scripture, Reason, and Tradition, seeking a *via media* (middle way), between Reformed and Catholic theology.

This protocols document is intended to provide a basic compendium of words, ideas, and advice to assist staff and students in AngliSchools engage more fully with the Anglican Identity of the school in which they work and learn.

AngliSchools Vision & Values

Our Vision

To be Australia's leading provider of quality, inclusive, fee-accessible Anglican schools; united in faith and learning, living our Anglican Identity.

Our Mission

To support and strengthen our existing schools and grow new AngliSchools which provide a high quality, inclusive and caring education, one that is deeply immersed in Anglican Identity.

Our Values

Faith: Living our Anglican Identity and teaching Gospel values

Our value of faith refers to trust in God and in God's promises; to a belief in something greater than ourselves. In AngliSchools, faith is incarnational, grounded in the belief that in Jesus we can encounter the living God. Faith is invitational, as we invite our students to deepen their own Christian conviction or plumb the depths of whatever faith tradition they come from or profess. Faith is interactive, in constant conversation with those of other faiths, or of no faith at all. Through chapel services and other opportunities, students interact with Anglican Identity and Gospel values. They are opened to the possibility of engaging with God, and can learn the value of stillness, silence, and reverence in a well-balanced life.

Inclusion: Promoting diversity, celebrating difference, welcoming all

Our schools are diverse communities. AngliSchools welcomes people of all denominations and of all faiths and none. We provide an inclusive, caring, Anglican education by telling a particular faith story while ensuring that the stories of others will also be heard, explored and respected. Our genuine celebration of difference includes welcoming and fully involving students, staff and parents regardless of their race or religion, gender or sexual orientation, age or ability. We see this promotion of diversity and inclusion as positive and enriching of a true sense of our shared humanity.

Respect: Compassionately respecting self, others and our world

The two great commandments, in which Jesus summed up the essence of the Christian faith, call us to love God and to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. Our schools thrive on the outworking of this through the value of respect that embraces self, others, and the world we share. This includes giving due regard to the full humanity of every person. It is lived out through individual self-esteem and acceptance, the honouring of all in the school community, and care for the environment, both local and global.

AngliSchools Core Values

Excellence: Pursuing high personal standards in all endeavours

Anglican schools have long maintained that the intellect is a gift from God, hence our reputation worldwide for the pursuit of academic excellence through exemplary models of teaching and learning. In the larger context of what makes us both human and children of God, AngliSchools also seeks excellence holistically in our wellbeing programs, our worship practices, and our service initiatives. We are learning communities who seek wisdom and new discovery in our intellectual pursuits, and together we endeavour to be our best in the classroom, the chapel, and the community.



AngliSchools Prayer

Gracious God,
we thank you for AngliSchools:
for all who work and learn,
teach and play, think and grow with us.
We ask your blessing on students and staff,
leaders and governors, and all in the AngliSchools family.
Give us grace to fully embrace our values;
so that faith, inclusion, respect, and excellence
flourish in our teaching and learning spaces,
our visual and performing arts programs,
our sporting, co-curricular, and service activities,
and in our acts of worship.
We pray in Jesus' name,

Amen.

AngliSchools Hymn

1. We're here to ask our questions, God,
as your own treasured children,
in schools where lively minds can sow
the seeds of life-long wisdom.
Keep stirring us to seek the truth
and, by your Spirit, teach us
that high and low and near and far
your love can always reach us.

2. We're here to grow in spirit, God,
inspired by Jesus' story,
his call to all to follow him
through sacrifice to glory.
Keep stirring us to find our faith
as Jesus Christ befriends us,
to know your will and do your work
wherever you may send us.

3. We're here to care for others, God,
in times of need or danger,
to love our neighbour as ourself,
to serve both friend and stranger.
Keep stirring us to do what's right,
delighting that you trust us
to make a better world for all
by words and deeds of justice.

4. We're here to offer you our lives,
for you alone can take us
beyond our childhood dreams and plans,
becoming what you make us.
Keep stirring us to praise you, God,
with hopeful hearts expressing
our thanks for every gift and grace,
each challenge, insight, blessing.

Words: Elizabeth J. Smith © AngliSchools 2012

Music: Perry Joyce

Chapel Conventions

Some Chapel Conventions for Students and Staff in AngliSchools

Entering, leaving, and during the chapel service

- Maintain quiet from when you enter the chapel space until you leave at the end of the service.
- Focus on being still both physically and mentally.
- Be open to listen to and engage with the service.

Participating

- Join in any formal responses in the liturgy (they will usually be indented and in bold text to show that they are congregational responses) for example:
 - » The Lord be with you:
and also with you.
 - » At the end of prayers and/or blessings, say **Amen.**
- Join in the singing of hymns and try to learn any unfamiliar ones.
- Join in any congregational prayers or creeds when invited.

At the Eucharist

- Remember to maintain quiet during the distribution of the bread and wine of Holy Communion.
- Come forward to receive the Eucharist or a blessing when invited to do so.
- Those who wish to receive the Eucharist cup their hands, right over left, to receive the bread, and consume the bread immediately it is given.
- Wait for the cup to be offered after the bread. Communicants may simply acknowledge the cup and return to their seats or take a sip of wine from the cup when it is offered.
- Those who wish to receive a blessing fold their hands across their chest or put them behind their back to signal their intention to the person distributing.

Basic Structure of the Church

Parish:

a particular area that has its own church/es and clergy.

Deanery:

several adjoining parishes led by an Area Dean.

Archdeaconry:

a group of adjoining deaneries led by an Archdeacon.

Diocese:

an area divided into several archdeaconries led by a Diocesan Bishop. The Anglican Church of Australia has 23 dioceses.

Province:

an area divided into several dioceses. The Anglican Church of Australia has five ecclesial provinces (Vic, SA, NSW, Qld, WA) and one extra-provincial diocese (Tas).

A Church:

several provinces which, taken together, are usually the same as a country e.g. The Anglican Church of Australia.

A Communion:

several self-governing Churches united in fellowship and associated in actions and relations. The Anglican Church of Australia is part of the Anglican Communion which recognises the leadership of the See of Canterbury.

Anglican Orders of Ministry

There are three Orders in the Anglican Church – Bishop, Priest, and Deacon. To be ordained, a person must be baptised and confirmed, be of good moral character, and be convinced and have convinced others of their Divine call/vocation to the office. Ordination is a sacrament and can only be administered by a bishop, acting as the minister of Christ and successor of the Apostles. The essence of one Order is not removed by advancement to another (e.g. a Bishop remains both Priest and Deacon).

Three Orders in the Anglican Church:

DEACON – (GREEK – *DIAKONOS* – A SERVANT)

A Deacon can:

- Undertake pastoral duties
- Preach and teach
- Assist in leading worship and officiate at Morning and Evening Prayer
- Baptise when required
- Officiate at Funerals
- Administer the Holy Communion

A Deacon cannot:

- Confirm
- Ordain
- Celebrate the Eucharist
- Solemnise a Marriage
- Give Absolution
- Give a Blessing

PRIEST – (GREEK – *PRESBUTEROS*)

A Priest can:

- Do all that a Deacon does and:
- Celebrate the Eucharist
- Solemnise a Marriage
- Give Absolution
- Give a Blessing

A Priest cannot:

- Confirm
- Ordain

BISHOP – (GREEK – *EPISKOPOS* – AN OVERSEER)

A Bishop can:

- Do all that a Deacon does
- Do all that a Priest does and:
- Confirm
- Ordain

Clergy Nomenclature

Key Roles, Titles, and Forms of Address

Following ordination to the diaconate most deacons take up the role of a curate (assistant cleric). Many complete one year as a deacon before being ordained to the priesthood, though some remain deacons for the entirety of their ministry, forming part of the permanent diaconate. A priest can undertake any role aside from those reserved for bishops. A bishop occupies an episcopal role but can relinquish that position and take up any role open to a priest. In this instance the bishop can still confirm and ordain.

ARCHBISHOP (BISHOP)

The bishop in charge of a province.

Title: The Most Reverend

Form of address: Your Grace.

ARCHDEACON (PRIEST)

A member of the clergy appointed by the bishop of a diocese to take administrative authority of an archdeaconry.

Title: The Venerable

Form of address: Archdeacon

CHAPLAIN (PRIEST)

Originally a cleric in charge of a chapel. Now ‘chaplain’ applies to members of the clergy who perform specialist duties outside a parish context e.g. to a bishop, to a school, to a hospital, to the defense forces etc.

Title: The Reverend

Form of address: Mr/Ms

DEAN (PRIEST)

The dean of a cathedral oversees its services and, with the chapter, supervises its fabric and property. The dean ranks next to the bishop and retains considerable independence.

Title: The Very Reverend

Form of address: Dean

DIOCESAN BISHOP (BISHOP)

The bishop in charge of a diocese.

Title: The Right Reverend

Form of address: Bishop

Clergy Nomenclature

EXAMINING CHAPLAIN A member of the clergy appointed by the bishop to assist in examining the fitness for Ordination of those presenting themselves. Many bishops now have some examining chaplains who are not ordained.

HONORARY CANON A member of the clergy who is a member of the chapter of a cathedral but does not hold a salaried post.
Title: The Reverend Canon
Form of address: Canon

METROPOLITAN (BISHOP) The title of a bishop who exercises provincial and not only diocesan powers.

NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTER (PRIEST OR DEACON) A member of the clergy who is licensed by the bishop to exercise ministry in an unpaid capacity.
Title: The Reverend
Form of address: Mr/Ms

PARISH PRIEST A term denoting a member of the clergy who has charge of a parish.

PRECENTOR (PRIEST) The priest in a cathedral responsible for choral services.
Title: The Reverend
Form of address: Mr/Ms

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE (PRIEST) Either the priest-in-charge of a daughter church in a parish, or the priest-in-charge of a parish in which the bishop has decided not to establish an incumbent.

PRIMATE (BISHOP) The chief bishop of a Church.
Title: The Most Reverend
Form of address: Your Grace

RECTOR (PRIEST) The incumbent of a parish.
Title: The Reverend
Form of address: Mr/Ms/Rector

Clergy Nomenclature

RESIDENTIARY CANON (PRIEST)

A member of the clergy who is one of the permanent, salaried staff of a cathedral and a member of its chapter.

Title: The Reverend Canon

Form of address: Canon

DEAN (PRIEST)

A member of the clergy appointed by the bishop to act as a channel of communication between the bishop and the incumbents, other clergy, and people of a group of parishes called a Deanery.

Title: The Reverend

Form of address: Mr/Ms

SUFFRAGAN BISHOP (BISHOP)

The term either denotes any bishop in relation to their archbishop, or metropolitan, by whom they may be summoned to assist at synod and give their vote. Or it denotes a bishop appointed to help a diocesan bishop, who acts with the authority of the diocesan bishop, and who (unlike an assistant bishop) has security of tenure.

Title: The Right Reverend

Form of address: Bishop

VICAR (PRIEST)

Another term for the senior priest of a parish.

Title: The Reverend

Form of address: Mr/Ms/Vicar

Note: Informally, male clergy are sometimes referred to as 'Father' and female clergy as 'Mother'. E.g. "Father James is leading the chapel service today while Mother Emily is doing a baptism in the parish church."

Key Roles of Anglican Laity

CHANCELLOR	The principal confidential advisor to the bishop of a diocese in legal and related matters.
CHURCHWARDEN	Usually two, elected annually at a parish meeting by mutual consent of the incumbent/priest-in-charge and people. Their duties include representing the laity, co-operating with the incumbent/priest-in-charge, maintaining order in the church and churchyard, and being responsible for the moveable property in the church.
LAITY/LAY (GREEK – LAOS – PEOPLE)	Strictly speaking laos means the whole people of God, but the word laity is generally used to refer to the members of the church who are not ordained.
LAY CHAPLAIN	A lay Anglican licensed by the bishop to undertake a chaplaincy role.
LAY READER	A lay Anglican licensed by the bishop to conduct religious services.
REGISTRAR	The Registrar issues the licences associated with clergy and licensed lay ministers, and keeps the necessary records.
SIDEPERSON	Someone elected annually at a parish meeting to assist the churchwardens.
VERGER	The person who takes care of the interior of a church.

Anglican Worship

The Church Year

Many Anglican churches and schools use the Church Year as a basis for their worship. The Church Year has a well-defined pattern and is split into two parts. The first part runs from Advent Sunday (at the very end of November or early December each year) to Pentecost Sunday. In this part of the Church Year the set bible readings focus on God's preparations for the revelation of Godself in Jesus Christ, the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples at Pentecost, and how this is expressed in a Trinitarian faith. The second part of the Church Year, which covers the Sundays after Pentecost from the second to the last (more than twenty in all) is the time the set bible readings focus on the implications of the teaching of Christ.

Apart from the general structure of the Church Year into seasons, there are many special holy days and saints' days. Seasons and special days are marked using different colours for clerical vestments and/or for frontals and hangings in churches. The standard four liturgical colours are white (Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter), violet (Advent and Lent), green (the season after the Epiphany and the season after Pentecost, also known as Ordinary Time), and red (Pentecost and Saints' Days). The cycle of the Church Year always runs: Advent – Christmas – Epiphany – Season after the Epiphany – Lent – Easter – Pentecost – Season after Pentecost – back to Advent. *The Australian Lectionary* contains the details and set readings for every day of the Church Year in a three-year cycle to be used in conjunction with *A Prayer Book for Australia*. Year A focuses on the gospel of Matthew, Year B on the gospel of Mark, and Year C on the gospel of Luke.

The Eucharist

The Eucharist is the principal worship service of the Anglican Church and is in two parts. The first is based on reading and proclaiming the Good News revealed in both the Old and New Testaments. The standard format therefore includes a reading from the Old Testament, a Psalm from the Old Testament Psalter, a reading from one of the New Testament letters (the Epistle), and a reading from one of the four Gospels in the New Testament. A sermon is preached, based on the text of one or more of the readings, followed by the saying of the Nicene Creed, a summary of the faith of the Church. Intercessions are then made. The second part of the service, from the Greeting of Peace to the Dismissal, is the Lord's Supper. The focal point is the taking, the blessing, and the sharing of bread and wine in which the real presence of Christ is known through the sacrament of the Eucharist.

The Sacraments

The two sacraments specifically instituted by Jesus (the dominical sacraments) are Holy Baptism and the Eucharist. There are five lesser sacraments: Confirmation, Ordination, Marriage, Anointing with oil, and Sacramental Confession (confession before a priest).

Anglican Worship

Holy Baptism

The rite by which a person is admitted to the Christian Church. It is carried out by washing with water in the name of the Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The gifts bestowed by God’s grace in Baptism are union with Christ, cleansing from sin, being made a member of the Body of Christ – the Church, and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Confirmation

The rite by which a person, having been baptised and made the baptismal vows, receives, through the laying on of the bishop’s hands, the particular grace of the Holy Spirit required to undertake full communicant membership of the Church.

Ordination

The rite by which a person, after due examination, receives, through the laying on of the bishop’s hands, the particular grace of the Holy Spirit required to undertake the responsibilities of the order to which he or she is called.

Marriage

The rite which gives effect to the content of Canon B/30/1: *The Church of England affirms, according to our Lord’s teaching, that marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death them do part, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side, for the procreation and nurture of children, for the hallowing and right direction of the natural instincts and affections, and for the mutual society, help and comfort which the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.*

Anointing

There are three distinct uses of oil in the life of the Church: the oil used to anoint the sick, following the example of the apostles and St James; the oil used as part of the preparation for baptism, sometimes call the oil of catechumens: the oil of chrism, the use of which symbolises the anointing by the Holy Spirit of monarchs, and of those who are baptized, confirmed, or ordained. Chrism may also be used to set apart objects for religious purposes e.g. sacred vessels etc. The three kinds of oil are usually blessed by the bishop in the cathedral of the diocese on Maundy Thursday, but in cases of necessity the priest administering the sacrament may bless the oil.

Sacramental Confession

The rite in which the sins of a repentant individual are confessed to God in the presence of a priest. After examination and counsel, the priest is authorised to forgive the individual in God’s name.

Anglican Worship

The Daily Offices

This is the daily authorised public prayer of the Church which the clergy have a special obligation to recite.

Divine Service – a title for the choir offices of the Church’s worship i.e. Morning and Evening Prayer

Morning Prayer (also known as Mattins)

Evening Prayer (also known as Evensong – a conflation of the ancient offices of Vespers and Compline)

Compline – the last office of the day. Reciting Compline is not obligatory but is widely employed.

The Creeds

From the Latin word *credo* – I believe, a creed is a brief, formal and authorised summary of the Christian faith.

The Apostles Creed (used at Morning and Evening Prayer) is the product of the Western Church. An abbreviated form was likely in use as early as 150 CE. Its present form can be traced to the eighth century.

The Nicene Creed (used at the Eucharist and at Ordination) is one of two Nicene Creeds. The first was formulated at the Council of Nicea in 325 CE. It is possible that the Council of Constantinople in 381 CE took parts of the Nicene Creed and expanded it to its present form. However it came about, the creed as we know it today was also based on the Baptismal Creed of Jerusalem. It is the product of the Eastern Church.

The Athanasian Creed (rarely used but is in the *Book of Common Prayer* after Morning Prayer). It is a product of the Western Church, emerging in Latin from Gaul (modern-day France, parts of Belgium, western Germany, and northern Italy) between 381 CE and 428 CE.

Anglican Glossary

ABLUTIONS:	the washing of the celebrant's fingers and the chalice after the Communion in the Eucharist.
ABSOLUTION:	the formal act of a priest or bishop pronouncing the forgiveness of sins by God.
ACOLYTE:	acolytes are those who carry candles in the procession behind the crucifer.
AISLE:	the part of the church on either side of the nave, usually divided by a row of pillars (so, not the gangway leading up the centre of the nave).
ALB:	a white linen garment reaching from the neck to the ankles worn by the ministers at the Eucharist.
ALTAR:	a raised structure, most often of wood, consecrated as the place where the Eucharist is celebrated.
ALTAR RAILS:	the rails marking off the area around or in front of the altar.
AUMBRY:	a cupboard, locker or closed recess in a wall used for keeping the Reserved Sacrament, and/or Holy Oils
BANNER:	banners are used for special occasions and depict sacred symbols or represent church organisations or schools.
BAPTISTRY:	the part of a church in which the sacrament of baptism is administered.
BLESSED SACRAMENT (OR SACRAMENT):	a term used of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, applied both to the service itself, and particularly to the consecrated elements.
BLESSING, THE:	the words spoken by the celebrant at the end of the service to assure the congregation of God's favour.
BOTH KINDS:	the custom of receiving both the bread and the wine in Holy Communion.
BREAD (SEE UNLEAVENED BREAD)	

Anglican Glossary

BURSE:	a case consisting of two squares of stiffened material, joined along one or three sides, in which the corporal is kept. It usually reflects the liturgical colour of the season or day.
CASSALB:	a long white garment worn by the clergy and others when officiating in church. It combines the functions of the cassock and the alb, hence the name.
CASSOCK:	a long garment worn by the clergy and others, especially when officiating in church. Bishops' cassocks are purple, priests' and deacons' are black, and choirs can wear a range of colours – most often red or royal blue.
CATHEDRA:	the bishop's chair or throne.
CATHEDRAL:	the church which contains the 'throne' or official seat of the bishop of the diocese and is therefore the principal church of the diocese, or its 'mother church'.
CELEBRANT:	the priest who officiates at the Eucharist.
CHALICE:	the cup used to hold the wine consecrated in the Eucharist, often made of precious metal.
CHANCEL:	the whole area in the main body of the church east of the nave and transepts.
CHANCEL STEP:	the step beneath the chancel arch where the sacrament of confirmation is administered.
CHASUBLE:	the outermost garment worn by bishops and priests when celebrating the Eucharist. Often decorated with Christian symbols, a chasuble usually agrees with the liturgical colour of a season or day in the Church Year.
CHURCH:	a building for public Christian worship.
CIBORIUM:	a chalice-shaped vessel with a lid used to hold the bread consecrated in the Eucharist.
CLERESTORY:	the upper part of the nave and transept of a cathedral or large church containing a series of windows which allow light into the central parts of the building.

Anglican Glossary

CLOISTER:	a covered walk or arcade connected with a cathedral or large church as a means of access between various buildings.
COLLECT:	a prayer said when the people of God are collected together and/or a prayer which collects or sums up the theme of the day. There is a Collect for each Sunday of the Church Year, and for all special days and occasions.
COMMUNICANT:	one who receives Holy Communion.
CONFESSION:	the acknowledgement of sin made publicly by the congregation during the Eucharist.
CONSECRATION:	the solemn act of setting apart for Divine service churches, and certain things within them e.g. altars and Eucharistic vessels. The words and actions whereby the bread and the wine of the Eucharist are set apart as sacred and sacramentally become the Body and Blood of Christ.
COPE:	a semi-circular cloak worn by the clergy on ceremonial occasions. As with a chasuble, a cope usually agrees with the liturgical colour of the day and is decorated with Christian symbols.
CORPORAL:	the square linen cloth that goes on the altar cloth in the centre of the altar on which the bread and the wine for the Eucharist are placed.
COVENANT:	a binding agreement or promise. In the bible it refers to a divine promise establishing or modifying God's relationship to humanity.
CREDESCENCE TABLE:	a small side table, usually placed in the south of the sanctuary near the altar to hold the bread, wine, and water to be used at the Eucharist.
CREED:	the confession of faith known as the Nicene Creed which is said during the Eucharist.
CROSIER:	or Pastoral Staff. The crook shaped staff carried by bishops.
CROSS:	the instrument of crucifixion.

Anglican Glossary

CROSS, SIGN OF THE:	an act of devotion made by drawing the right hand from forehead to the centre of the chest and then from left shoulder to right shoulder, completing the act by returning the hand to the centre.
CRUCIFER:	one who carries the cross at the front of the procession.
CRUCIFIX:	a cross with the figure of Christ fixed to it.
CRUCIFORM:	in the shape of a cross.
CRUETS:	the vessels of glass, precious metal, or earthenware in which the wine and the water for the Eucharist are brought to the altar.
CRYPT:	an underground chamber or vault beneath the main floor of a church used as a burial chamber, or as a chapel, or oratory.
DEACON:	in some churches the Eucharist is celebrated by a Priest, a Deacon, and Sub-Deacon. Although originally the ministers celebrating were in the Orders so named, now the function of Deacon and/or Sub-Deacon is often carried out by a Priest. The Deacon of the Eucharist, in this sense, reads the Gospel, presents the elements to the celebrant, invites the congregation to pray, and says the words of the Dismissal at the end of the Eucharist.
DISMISSAL:	the words used at the end of the service to dismiss the people.
ELEMENTS:	the bread and the wine of the Eucharist.
ELEVATION:	the lifting up of the Host in the Eucharist for the faithful to see and reverence.
EPISTLE:	the passage of scripture, usually from one of the New Testament letters, that is read before the Gospel reading in the Eucharist.
EUCHARIST: (GREEK – <i>EUKHARISTIA</i> – GRATEFUL OFFERING)	an alternative name for the Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper, or the Mass.
EWER:	a large jug with a wide spout used to carry the water to be used in Baptism to the font.

Anglican Glossary

FACULTY:	any change to consecrated buildings, their lands, and contents require a faculty. A faculty is a legal notice usually issued by the bishop's Chancellor.
FONT:	the receptacle for the water used in Baptism. In traditional Anglican churches the font is near the entrance to symbolise that Baptism is the way into the Church.
FRONTAL:	the covering for the front of an altar. Frontals are usually changeable according to the liturgical colour of the season or day in the church calendar.
GIRDLE:	also known as the rope and originally as the cincture, the girdle is a white rope worn around the waist over an alb or cassalb.
GOSPEL: (OLD ENGLISH – GOD SPEL – GOOD TIDINGS)	the reading from one of the four Gospels read after the Epistle in the Eucharist.
GRADUAL:	the psalm, or part of the psalm or hymn, sung between the Epistle and the Gospel at the Eucharist.
GREETING OF PEACE:	the greeting exchanged by the faithful before the elements of the Eucharist are placed on the altar.
HASSOCK:	a cushion for kneeling; also called a kneeler.
HIGH ALTAR:	the main altar of a church, standing in the centre of the east end.
HOLY COMMUNION:	an alternative name for the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper, or the Mass. Also, the act of receiving the bread and the wine at the Eucharist.
HOLY TABLE:	an alternative word to altar.
HOST:	the consecrated bread in the Eucharist.
INSTITUTION, WORDS OF:	the words used by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper as he broke the bread and blessed the cup, calling his disciples to "do this in remembrance of me", thereby establishing the Eucharist.
INTERCESSION:	the prayers of petition on behalf of others which follow the Creed in the Eucharist.

Anglican Glossary

INTINCTION:	the dipping of the Eucharistic bread in the wine (prohibited in the Diocese of Perth for health reasons).
LADY CHAPEL:	a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, when it forms part of a bigger church.
LAVABO:	the washing of the celebrant's hands at the completion of the Offertory in the Eucharist, often done by a server.
LAVABO DISH:	the dish into which the water for the lavabo is poured.
LAVABO TOWEL:	the towel used to wipe the celebrant's hands at the lavabo.
LECTERN:	a reading desk in church, especially one on which the Bible stands.
LITURGY:	either the name for the service of the Eucharist, or an inclusive word to cover all the services of the Church.
LORD'S SUPPER:	an alternative name for the Eucharist, Holy Communion, or Mass.
MANUAL ACTS:	the actions of the celebrant at the consecration of the elements of the Eucharist, including the lifting of the paten and the breaking of the bread.
MASS:	an alternative name for the Eucharist, Holy Communion, or Lord's Supper.
MITRE:	the head-dress worn by a bishop symbolising his or her authority.
NARTHEX:	the area to the west end of the nave separated by columns, wall or rails.
NAVE:	the body of a church excluding chancel, choir, baptistry, and aisles, which is traditionally assigned to the laity.
NAVE ALTAR:	the altar which stands at the head of the nave.
OFFERTORY:	the bringing to, or presentation at the altar, of the bread and the wine to be consecrated in the Eucharist.

Anglican Glossary

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON:	the first of the three readings common at the Eucharist.
ORATORY:	a small chapel or place for private worship, not necessarily in a church.
PALL:	at the Eucharist, a stiffened linen square used to cover the chalice.
PAROUSIA: (GREEK – COMING OR PRESENCE)	refers to the second coming of Christ predicted in the New Testament.
PATEN:	the dish, often of precious metal, on which the bread is placed at the Eucharist.
PASCHAL CANDLE:	the candle placed on a large separate candlestick on the north side of the sanctuary. It is marked with the sign of the cross, the Alpha and Omega symbols, the year, and five studs/nails to represent the wounds of Christ. It is first lit on Easter Eve and then for all principal services from Easter to Pentecost, for baptisms and for funerals.
PEW:	a fixed wooden bench providing seating for the congregation in a church or chapel.
PORCH:	the covered approach to the entrance of a church.
PRESIDENT:	the priest or bishop who presides over the Eucharist. The President says the opening greeting, the collect, the absolution, the Peace, takes the bread and cup, says the Eucharistic prayer, breaks the consecrated bread, receives the sacrament, and says the blessing.
PROCESSION:	the proceeding of a group of people in orderly succession during a religious service or festival. Church processions are usually led by a crucifer bearing a processional cross, the crucifer often followed by two acolytes bearing candles.
PROCESSIONAL CROSS:	a cross mounted on a pole and carried at the head of a procession in church.
PULPIT:	an elevated stand of stone or wood for the preacher or reader.

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PURIFICATOR: a small cloth used at the Eucharist to wipe clean the chalice and paten.

PYX: a small box, often of precious metal, in which the consecrated Host may be kept or carried, especially when taking Communion to the sick.

REAL PRESENCE: an expression used in Anglican Eucharistic theology to emphasise the actual presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the sacrament, in contrast to views which maintain that the Body and Blood are present only symbolically.

REGISTERS: the books in which details of services, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and burials are kept for reference.

RESERVATION: the practice of keeping bread and wine consecrated at the Eucharist.

ROODSCREEN: in a cathedral or large church, the screen (usually of wood) separating the chancel from the nave.

RUBRIC: the directions in italics at the beginning of an order of service and/or during the service for its proper ordering.

SACRAMENT: a religious ceremony or ritual that imparts divine grace, such as baptism, the Eucharist and confirmation.

SACRISTY: a room in a church or chapel for keeping sacred vessels and the vestments (robes) of the clergy.

SANCTUARY: the part of a church that contains the principal altar.

SCARF: a long, narrow strip of black material which forms part of the dress of clergy at non-Eucharistic services.

SCRIPTURE: the sacred writings of Christianity contained in the Bible.

SERMON: or address. A talk delivered from the pulpit or elsewhere in a church after the Gospel at the Eucharist, and at other services. Its main purpose is to proclaim the Gospel by way of explanation, instruction, or exhortation.

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SERVER:	a person or persons who assists the celebrant at the Eucharist.
STALL:	a fixed seat for clergy or others on both sides of the choir in a cathedral or other large church.
STATIONS OF THE CROSS:	a series of fourteen devotional pictures or carvings depicting incidents on the last journey of Jesus Christ from Pontius Pilate's house to being placed in the tomb. Some churches add a fifteenth station depicting the resurrection of Christ.
STOLE:	a long, narrow garment hanging around the neck and down to the knees, which is worn by priests at the Eucharist together with other Eucharistic vestments. It usually agrees with the liturgical colour of the day or season. When worn by a deacon it is worn like a sash over the left shoulder and under the right arm.
STOUP:	a basin near the entrance of a church containing holy water with which the faithful may sprinkle themselves.
SURPLICE:	a garment of white material with wide sleeves usually worn over a cassock.
TRANSEPT:	the arms of a cruciform church set at right angles to the nave, usually aligned north and south.
UNLEAVENED BREAD:	bread without yeast which is the bread commonly used at the Eucharist.
VEIL:	a square cloth used to cover the chalice at the Eucharist. It usually reflects the liturgical colour of the season or day and is used with a matching burse.
VESTRY:	the room attached to a church in which vestments (robes) are kept, and in which the clergy or choir robe.
WAFER/HOST:	the small disc, usually of unleavened bread, which is consecrated at the Eucharist and received by the people at Communion. A Priest's Wafer is the larger disc of unleavened bread used during the consecration before being broken, received by the priest and others in the sanctuary, and then shared.

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WATER:

the pouring of water into the wine at Eucharist represents either the common practice in New Testament times of mingling table wine with water, or the water brought forth from the side of Jesus Christ when he was pierced by a spear at his Crucifixion.

WINE:

the fermented juice of the grape used by our Lord at the Last Supper and consecrated with the bread at the Eucharist to become sacramentally the Body and Blood of Christ.

The Books of the Bible

Overview

The Bible is the sacred text of Christianity. It tells the story of God's covenant with God's people, first with the Jews, as revealed in the Old Testament, and then with the whole of humanity, as revealed in the New Testament through the salvation won by the life, death, and resurrection of God's Son Jesus Christ. Many Bibles also contain the Apocrypha, the group of writings received by the early Church as part of the Greek version of the Old Testament, but not included in the Hebrew Bible. The apocryphal books were written mostly during the 200 years before Christ. When they appear in the Bible they are generally found between the Old and New Testaments.

The Old Testament

The Pentateuch

The first five books of the Old Testament. These books are compilations of previously written, no longer existing, documents dating from the ninth to fifth centuries BCE from at least four sources. The Pentateuch was completed in its present form by c.370 BCE. The five books are:

Genesis – contains the Creation accounts, the Fall, the Flood, and the idea of Covenant. It also records the stories of the great Patriarchs of the Jewish Faith – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph.

Period of history: prehistory to c.1550 BCE.

Exodus – records God's favour to the Jewish people i.e. the release of Israel under Moses from slavery in Egypt, their journeys in the wilderness to the promised land of Canaan. The symbolism of the Passover and God's act of rescue was used by the early Christian community to describe the work of Christ.

Period of history: c.1290 to 1250 BCE.

Leviticus – entirely concerned with the laws of the Hebrew priesthood, about sacrifice, the consecration of priests, and ritual purity.

Period of history: c.1300 BCE to long after the settlement in Canaan c.1200 BCE.

Numbers – contains genealogies, laws, wilderness wanderings, and conflicts east of Jordan.

Period of history: c.1290 to 1250 BCE.

Deuteronomy – much later than the other four, contains exhortations and a code of laws based on beliefs on the special relationship of Israel with God. Period of history: c.650 BCE.

The Books of the Bible

History Books:

Joshua – after the death of Moses, Joshua becomes the leader of the Israelites, taking them into the Promised Land of Canaan. After the conquest of Canaan, Israel was divided into the twelve tribes. The book ends with the death of Joshua. Several sources edited by c.620 BCE.

Period of history: c.1250 to 1200 BCE.

Judges – uses history to reveal the character of the God of Israel. It contains an account of twelve judges (rulers or leaders) including Deborah, Gideon, and Samson. The teaching is prophetic: Israel goes after other gods, God sends a foreign enemy to punish her, Israel repents, and God sends a leader to deliver her. Several sources edited by c.620 BCE.

Period of history: c.1200 – 1020 BCE.

Ruth – not historical but is in the Old Testament due to the story being set in the time of the judges. It's a love story with a message to teach about the nature of God and the privilege and responsibility of being God's people. The book appeared c.425 BCE.

Period of history: c.1200 to 1020 BCE.

1 Samuel – the story of Samuel, prophet, priest, and seer, and his call by God. The foundation of the monarchy including the stories of Saul, David, and Jonathan. Several sources edited by c.620 BCE.

Period of history: c.1020 to 1000 BCE.

2 Samuel – the story of David's reign as King, the planning of a temple, and the promise of God's favour to David's line. Several sources edited by c.620 BCE.

Period of history: c.1000 to 961 BCE.

1 Kings – the death of David and the establishment of Solomon as King. The building and dedication of the temple. Stories of Elijah and Elisha. Several sources edited by c.620 BCE.

Period of history: c.961 to 850 BCE.

2 Kings – the last days of Elijah. Elisha succeeds him. Accounts of the lives of the Kings of Judah and Israel until the fall of Samaria (c.722 BCE). King Josiah's reforms based on the discovery of a law-book in the Temple (621 BCE). More history of Judah to the fall of Jerusalem. The destruction of the Temple (587 BCE) and the departure of the Jews into exile in Babylon. Several sources edited by c.620 BCE.

Period of history: c.850 to 570 BCE.

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1 Chronicles – originally the two books of the Chronicles and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah formed one book. The Chronicler is interested in the holy community established and maintained by God and its worship centred on the Temple in Jerusalem. 1 Chronicles contains the genealogies of the tribes of Israel and Judah, the history of David, and the accession of Solomon. The book appeared c.350 BCE.

Period of history: c.1000 to 961 BCE.

2 Chronicles – tells of the reign of Solomon and the history of the Kings of Judah to the captivity. The book appeared c.350 BCE.

Period of history: c.961 to 570 BCE.

Ezra – Ezra was a scribe who went to Jerusalem with a party of exiles. The book is in two parts, separated by a gap of possibly more than half a century. The first part tells of the return of the captives from Babylon at the beginning of the reign of Cyrus (538 BCE) and the rebuilding of the Temple. The second part tells of the second return of exiles in the reign of Artaxerxes in 457 BCE. The book appeared c.350 BCE.

Period of history: 538 to 457 BCE.

Nehemiah – the story of Nehemiah, cupbearer to the King of Persia, and how he was given the task of rebuilding the walls of the city of Jerusalem, completing it in fifty-two days. He was later instrumental in ending many of the abuses he found in Jerusalem. The book appeared c.350 BCE.

Period of history: c.445 to 432 BCE.

Esther – a fictional episode in the history of those Israelites who did not return from the Captivity. Esther, a Jewess, Mordecai's adopted daughter, becomes the King's favourite wife. On learning of a plot to destroy the Jewish exiles, she puts her life on the line to save them. The book appeared c.250 BCE.

Period of history: c.480 BCE.

Poetry / Wisdom Books:

Job – a classic exploration of the problem of human suffering. Most of the book is a dialogue between the righteous Job, who endures many hardships, and his three so-called friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. God eventually intervenes revealing God's wisdom, Job stops questioning God's ways, and Job is restored. The book appeared c.400 BCE. It has no historical basis.

Psalms – the hymn book of the Second Temple (post 510 BCE) containing hymns of praise, lament, prophetic songs etc. written by different people at different times. The collection as we have it today may have been completed by c.200 BCE.

The Books of the Bible

Proverbs – an anthology of wise sayings, both from Israel and elsewhere, which enshrines much profound thought about the human condition. The wise are those who follow the ways of God. The collection may have been completed by c.300 BCE.

Ecclesiastes – probably written in Jerusalem, this book of wisdom writing suggests that human freedom is limited. The author focuses on the apparent meaningless of life and the inevitability of death. It appeared c.250 BCE.

Song of Solomon – a song, or collection of songs, in praise of the beauty of the natural world and the wonder and mystery of human love. The book appeared c.300 BCE.

Lamentations – consists of five poems mourning the fall of the city of Jerusalem. From the poems there emerges an unquenchable trust in God. The book appeared c.540 BCE.

Period of history: 587 to 580 BCE.

Prophecy Books:

Isaiah – written by three different prophets. First Isaiah (chapters 1-39) spent his whole life in Jerusalem and was likely a member of the court. He was active as a prophet during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and most of that of Hezekiah. He prophesied that one day a King of David's line – a Messiah – would come to restore the universal reign of God. This collection of prophecies was likely gathered from 600 to 450 BCE and reflects the period of history c.740 to 700 BCE. Second Isaiah (chapters 40 - 55) was a contemporary of King Cyrus. He conveys a message of comfort. After the destruction of Jerusalem, a time of restoration is at hand. This section of Isaiah contains the four Songs of the Suffering Servant who is seen by Christians to foreshadow the work of Christ. These chapters emerged c.450 BCE and reflect the period of history c.540 to 489 BCE. Third Isaiah (chapters 56-66) is a collection of prophecies from several sources, most likely the disciples of Second Isaiah. These chapters also emerged c.450 BCE and reflect the period of history from c.540 to 489 BCE.

Jeremiah – the prophet Jeremiah was born about 645 BCE of a priestly family living near Jerusalem. He lived in turbulent times culminating in the rise to power of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, who captured Jerusalem in 597 BCE. Jeremiah prophesied disaster and was persecuted and imprisoned. Out of his suffering he developed a friendship with God, speaking of a new covenant written in the heart. The book is a compilation of several sources and may not have appeared in its present form until c.500 BCE or much later.

Period of history: 587 to 580 BCE.

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Ezekiel – it is thought that Ezekiel was preaching in Palestine until the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE after which he continued his ministry amongst the exiles in Babylon. His teaching is based on the need for inner conversion to the ways of God, a conversion which will bring from God a ‘new heart and a new spirit’. The book emerged c.450 BCE.

Period of history: c.597 to 571 BCE.

Daniel – is not truly a prophetic book. Written by someone who wanted to conceal his identity for fear of persecution, probably that of Antiochus IV Epiphanes who reigned from 175 to 163 BCE, the book aims to strengthen the faith of the suffering Jews. It contains stories of how Daniel and his companions triumphed over various trials, including the stories of the fiery furnace and the lion’s den. The overall message of the book is that God’s Kingdom will come, ruled over by one like a son of man. Daniel is the key Old Testament example of apocalyptic literature. The book appeared c.165 BCE.

Period of history: c.168 to 165 BCE.

Hosea – Hosea used his marriage to Gomer as an allegory. Gomer was continually unfaithful to him, a reflection of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God. Hosea uses the ideals of a faithful marriage relationship to show the people of Israel what God requires of them: righteousness, justice, loyalty, mercy, and all based on a knowledge of God. The book appeared c.650 BCE.

Period of history: c.746 to 725 BCE.

Joel – the prophet Joel was likely attached to the Temple. The first part of his book describes an impending plague of locusts and calls the people to repentance and prayer. This is linked to the second part of the book by the apocalyptic concept of the Day of the Lord in which the nations will be judged but the Lord will triumph, pouring out his spirit on all flesh. The book appeared c.350 BCE.

Period of history: c.450 BCE.

Amos – in the reign of Jeroboam II, God called Amos from Tekoa in Judah and sent him to Bethel to prophesy against the corruption, injustice, and vice of his day. Amos, too, warned his compatriots of the coming of the Day of the Lord. The book appeared c.720 BCE or later.

Period of history: c.755 to 745 BCE.

Obadiah – much of the book is also found in Jeremiah, but it is hard to know which was written first. In the first part of the prophecy, Edom is threatened with vengeance for gloating over the discomfiture of Israel at the fall of Jerusalem. In the second part, wider retribution is threatened when the Day of the Lord comes. The book appeared c.500 BCE.

Period of history: 586 BCE.

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Jonah – a fictional prophet whose book teaches that, in God’s providence, even those who do not belong to God’s chosen people can offer God penitence and worship and be accepted by God. The book appeared c. 330 BCE.

Micah – a prophet in Judah during the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah. Not afraid to prophesy disaster, Micah announces that God puts Israel on trial and finds her people guilty of immorality and corruption. There will, however, be a brighter future when God will reign again in Zion. This will not come about until Israel has learned her lesson and turned again to righteousness. The book appears c.520 BCE.

Period of history: c.615 to 610 BCE.

Nahum – the book is a series of poems rejoicing in the fall of the city of Ninevah to the Babylonians and Medes in 612 BCE reflecting God’s judgement as the sovereign Lord of history. The book appeared c.600 BCE.

Period of history: c.615 to 610 BCE.

Habakkuk – God makes use of the Chaldeans to punish God’s people, but the Chaldeans, in their turn, will be punished by God due to their cruelty. God will save God’s people; righteousness will prevail in the end. The book appeared c.597 BCE.

Period of history: c.605 to 597 BCE.

Zephaniah – active during the reign of Josiah, this prophet warns that the Day of the Lord will be a day of punishment for those who ignore God’s laws. Obedience and humility are prerequisites to the salvation enjoyed only by a humble remnant. The book appeared c.630 BCE.

Period of history: c.640 to 630 BCE.

Haggai – when the exiles returned from Babylon, they became disheartened. Haggai and his contemporary Zechariah put fresh heart into them, persuading Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest to resume rebuilding the Temple. The glory of the new Temple would far outshine the old, and usher in a new age. The book appeared c. 519 BCE.

Period of history: 520 BCE.

Zechariah – like Haggai, Zechariah concentrates on the rebuilding of the Temple, seeing it as a symbol of national restoration and a reminder of the coming of the messianic era in which God’s servant will rule on God’s behalf. Although the people are down-trodden now, they will, in future, become powerful, and Jerusalem will become the religious centre of the world. Part 1 of the book (chapters 1 to 8) appeared c.519 BCE. Part 2 of the book (chapters 9 to 14) appeared c.320 BCE.

Period of history of both: 520 BCE.

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Malachi – an anonymous author active long after the Exile. The author describes God as a loving father and the ruler of God’s people. The Day of the Lord will come as a purifying fire that causes the righteous to triumph. The book appeared c.460 BCE.

Period of history: c.470 BCE.

The New Testament

The Gospels: (Old English – *god spel* – good tidings). The good news about the coming of the Kingdom of God, proclaimed in word and deed by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as the **Synoptic Gospels** due to a large amount of common subject matter, and similar phrasing and structure. A document which may have existed but is no longer extant has been given the code letter Q. It is thought to have been the source of those passages in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke which show a close similarity to each other but not to anything in the Gospel of Mark.

Matthew – the Gospel of Matthew probably appeared a little after 70 CE. It was unlikely to have been written by Matthew himself but was obviously written for a community with strong Jewish connections, due to the broader use of the Old Testament in Matthew than in the other three Gospels.

Mark – the Gospel of Mark is generally understood to be the first to appear in c.65 CE. Its authorship is uncertain, but whoever wrote it had some connection with Peter, due to the emphasis placed on him in the text. Mark is the shortest gospel and reads like an eye-witness account.

Luke – the Gospel of Luke appeared c.80 to 85 CE. Most agree that it was written by Luke, the companion of Paul. It was written in and for the Gentile world to show that the mission of Christ was universal and not restricted to the Jewish community. Luke places great emphasis on the work of Jesus amongst the outcasts of society. As it is generally agreed that Luke also wrote the **Acts of the Apostles** (the fourth book of the New Testament positioned after Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) Luke’s Gospel and Acts taken together provide a comprehensive account of both the ministry of Christ and the growth of the early Church.

John – the date and authorship of the Gospel of John is unclear, but it is generally understood to be later than the others, possibly appearing in c.100 CE. John is related to three worlds of thought, the primitive Christian tradition, Judaism, and Hellenistic (Greek-based) thought. The gospel is longer and more meditative than the other three, many of the passages ascribed to Jesus likely to be the author’s own interpretation and development of the teaching of Christ. John’s gospel proclaims that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God.

The Books of the Bible

The Epistles: (Latin – *epistola* – letter). The Letters of Paul, the Pastoral Letters, the Letter to the Hebrews (i.e. Jewish Christians), the Letters of James, Peter, John, and Jude are collectively known as the Epistles.

The Letters of Paul: Paul was the first great missionary and teacher of the Christian Church. He made three extended journeys, following a consistent pattern of visiting a place, establishing a Christian community there, staying for a time, then appointing local leaders and moving on. He kept in touch with each place/community by writing letters, by re-visiting, or both. He also answered by letter the problems each place/community brought to his notice.

Romans – in the Letter to the Romans (c.57 CE from Corinth) Paul explains how both Jew and Gentile alike need the good news of the Gospel. He outlines God’s salvation in terms of being justified by faith through God’s grace, and then gives practical advice about the duties of a Christian as citizen and compassionate neighbour.

1 Corinthians – in the First Letter to the Corinthians (c.54 CE from Ephesus) Paul attacks those who have tried to divide the Christian community and questioned his authority as an apostle. He explains the spiritual gifts and their proper use in the life of the Church. Key to his message is the Christian hope of the resurrection.

2 Corinthians – the Second Letter to the Corinthians was written in two parts (chapters 1-9 c.56 CE from Macedonia and chapters 10-13 c.55 CE from Ephesus) In the first part, Paul defends himself as a minister of a new covenant and a preacher of the Gospel of Christ. In the second part Paul explains how his record of suffering for Christ is second to none, and that he is prepared to be firm with troublemakers within the Christian community at Corinth.

Galatians – in the Letter to the Galatians (c.56 CE possibly from Macedonia) Paul speaks of his conversion and the authenticity of his apostleship. He warns the Christians in Galatia against putting the Law before faith in Christ and explains that the fruits of the Holy Spirit are the foundation of the Christian life.

Ephesians – in the Letter to the Ephesians (c. 60 CE from Rome) Paul proclaims the mystery of the Gospel and explains that his call from God is to share this mystery with the Gentiles. He exhorts the Ephesian Christians to live in unity and to uphold high moral standards, particularly in their homes.

Philippians – in the Letter to the Philippians (c.56 CE from Ephesus) Paul thanks the Christians in Philippi for their friendship, their steadfastness of faith and for their gifts. He warns against those who think salvation lies in the Law and calls for constant efforts to reflect the mind of Christ.

The Books of the Bible

Colossians – in the Letter to the Colossians (c.60 CE from Rome) Paul affirms that all the fullness of God rests in Christ and that the Christians in Colossae have their share in his salvation.

1 Thessalonians – in the First Letter to the Thessalonians (c.50 CE from Corinth) Paul calms the fears of the Christians in Thessalonika about the fate of the dead. He speaks of the Day of the Lord (in the New Testament this Old Testament idea becomes the Parousia, the return of Christ to claim his kingdom) which Paul believed, at that time, to be imminent.

2 Thessalonians – in the Second Letter to the Thessalonians (c.51 CE from Corinth) Paul gives thanks for their faith and endurance. He says more about the Day of the Lord (Parousia), indicating it may not happen as quickly as he had thought, and encourages the Thessalonians to continue to be united in Christ.

Philemon – in the Letter to Philemon (c.60 CE from Rome), Paul pleads for compassionate treatment of Philemon’s slave Onesimus, who has returned after running away. Although Paul accepts that Philemon still owns Onesimus, he encourages them to live as brothers with the same Master, given they are both Christians.

The Pastoral Letters: The authorship of this group of letters is uncertain, making it difficult to establish their date of writing.

1 Timothy – includes warnings against false teachers, teaches about the purpose of the Law, and gives instructions about prayer, women, elders, deacons, widows, and slaves.

2 Timothy – Timothy is reminded of the gifts he has been given by God and exhorted to stand firm in the face of the difficulties he faces.

Titus – includes what is expected of elders, the condemnation of false teachers, and how Christian behaviour is a response to the example of Christ’s sacrifice.

Hebrews – possibly c.68 CE. The argument of the Letter to the Hebrews is based entirely on the Old Testament. It presents Christ, God’s Son and heir and Lord of creation, as the final word. Christ has achieved the salvation of humanity, and is therefore greater than angels, than Moses or Joshua. Christ’s priesthood is greater than, and different to, the ancient priesthood of the Hebrews. Christ is a new covenant sealed with his own blood, and his sacrifice is greater than any demanded by the Law.

James – possibly c.100 CE. The unknown author addresses Jewish Christians scattered all over the Greco-Roman world, presuming their familiarity with the Old Testament. It is a long list of instructions on how the Christian should behave and act.

The Books of the Bible

1 Peter – possibly pre 67 CE or later, from Rome. It is thought that the letter may have been the work of Peter himself, or the work of someone writing later under his instruction and authority. It provides a valuable summary of the theology of the apostles (of which Peter was one).

2 Peter – possibly c.90 CE. The authorship is uncertain. The author expects the Christian to respond to the generosity of God with high standards of behaviour and warns against false teaching and immorality. Even though there may be a delay, the Day of the Lord (Parousia) will eventually come.

1 John – c.100 CE. All three letters of John are so like the Gospel of John in style and doctrine that it is almost certain they come from the same source. The First Letter of John was written to the Christian communities in Asia, insisting that the commandments be kept, especially the commandments to love God and neighbour.

2 John – c.100 CE. A letter written to a Christian community in answer to those who were refusing to acknowledge that Christ, the Son of God, came in human nature.

3 John – c.100 CE. A note to Gius about the problem of Diotrephes who refuses to acknowledge the authority of the ministry of the author and his companions.

Jude – c.90 CE. The author denounces false teachers in the Christian community and declares that punishment awaits them. The faithful are enjoined to hold fast to, and put their trust in, God's love.

The Revelation of John: Possibly c.95 CE or later. The book is an apocalyptic document and totally unlike any other in the New Testament. It has some similarities with Daniel in the Old Testament. Written at a time when the Church was suffering persecution, the powerful visions of the book were intended to strengthen and give hope to the faithful. Names and places are disguised as the author embarks on warnings to seven churches after an initial vision. Evocative pictures are painted of God's majesty in heaven, the triumph of Christ, and the new Jerusalem, showing that the final victory is won and that the Church's confidence in God's promises is unshaken.

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