

Resources Bulletin

Theological Education in the Anglican Communion (TEAC)



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Studying Anglican Doctrine

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In his great set of poems 'The Four Quartets' T.S. Eliot describes how we can have an experience but miss the meaning. This can be as true for theological students as anyone else: they can become so preoccupied with the practicalities of ministry and church life, especially in a crisis such as this, that they lose touch with the meaning of what it is all about.

Spending time in study of the doctrines of the Christian faith, the beliefs which undergird all that we do, can make all the difference. This study guide provides an opportunity for students to do this, with the help of Anglican and ecumenical texts freely available on the internet, not least for those across the Anglican Communion who do not have access to theological libraries. Furthermore, as Eliot goes on to say, finding the meaning 'restores the experience in a different form.'

Recent statements

The study guide will build on the dialogue about doctrine that Anglican churches have had with each other and with other churches across the world ever since they were formed. Over recent decades these conversations have produced a rich and authoritative collection of agreed statements, written by Anglican theologians in partnership with theologians from other churches, to create a broad and rich map of the Christian faith as it has been received and handed on by these churches.

In this study guide, then, taking advantage

of the availability of these statements from various websites, a concise and well-grounded introduction to Christian doctrine is assembled for use in home groups, study programmes, seminaries and theological colleges across the Anglican Communion. It is being produced by members of the Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order (IASCUFUO) working in partnership with TEAC. It is being compiled to be uploaded onto the theological education pages of the Anglican Communion website, to be freely available for use by all.

Conversation

To help readers engage with the texts the study guide will use an interactive approach, with questions and answers running through every chapter. It will begin with broad questions, namely what is doctrine in general and what is the doctrine shared by all historic churches, and from there narrows down to specific Anglican doctrine. The first chapter will look at the nature of doctrine in general, introducing its place within discipleship and mission as a whole. The second chapter will turn to the doctrines of the Nicene Creed, a creed shared by churches of both East and West, South and North, using a recent and widely welcomed ecumenical text, *Confessing the One Faith*, that unpacks and applies its meaning for today. This chapter will offer a structure for engaging with it. The third and longest chapter turns to the doctrine of the Church, drawing on a rich selection of Anglican and ecumenical ecclesiological statements, to approach this topical and important subject from a number of directions, also touching on the nature of

'Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.'

Philippians
2.12-13
(NRSV)

For more information on TEAC go to <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/theology/theological-education.aspx>

COVID-19: The Anglican Alliance has produced a set of five Bible studies written for this time of crisis and fear—available from <https://anglicanalliance.org/covid-19-how-can-churches-respond/>

'By better understanding the ways in which other Christians hold, express and live the faith, each confessional tradition is often led to a better understanding also of itself, and can begin to see its own formulations of doctrine in a broader perspective. This experience and discernment of each other is mutually enriching. The process respectfully approaches the mystery of salvation and its various formulations, with no intent to "reduce" the mystery by any or all formulations. The process is a means of more adequately assessing expressions of the truth of revelation, their interrelation, their necessity and the possible diversity of formulations.'

World Council of Churches, *Notions of 'Hierarchy of Truth' – An Ecumenical Interpretation*, 36.

Agreed statements, however, only take us so far. They need to be not only read but understood, interpreted and expressed in worship, mission and discipleship. There need to be moments when 'the penny drops' and the meaning of doctrines becomes clear and energising and we go on to express them in our lives.

All of this will be very different in different places, depending on the social and cultural realities of the respective context. Each study group will find its own way of doing these things, at a level and in a way that is appropriate for them. The person leading the study process will need to be sensitive to these dynamics and fashion the study accordingly.

To help with this, this study guide will draw on an approach to learning already promoted in this bulletin and often described as 'See-Judge-Act', or 'Taking in, Taking stock, Taking action'. It is a simple but effective three-step method of reflection and action which moves from the learner's context to the text in question and then to a practical response, to be repeated again and again:

See

This first step is all about coming to see the situation in which we find ourselves – our 'context'. Such an analysis will ask what is happening, who is involved, and what are its effects. In this case, with doctrine as the subject, the questions will be about what is the current role of doctrine (or specific doctrines) in the life of our church (whether local or regional), who is involved in that role, and what effect does it have. This first step of the pedagogical process requires a degree of social analysis and is best done as a group exercise, involving those who share this reality and who can analyse it together.

Judge

The second step is all about gaining a critical perspective on the subject, by learning from authorities such as scripture, church teaching and scholarship, and comparing and contrasting what is currently the case in our context with what could be the case. As far as doctrine is concerned, this step involves reading and learning from authoritative ecumenical and Anglican

statements, on the meaning and place of doctrine and specific doctrines in the life of the church, and then reflecting on how the situation uncovered by the first step is positively critiqued by this. What changes and growth in understanding of doctrine, and specific doctrines, could be made, and how could they find more authentic and inspiring expression in our Christian lives? Most of the contents of the study guide will resource this second step.

Act

In response to the critical perspective on church life gained in the second step, the third step is all about deciding how in practice we are going to bridge the gap between what is happening and what should be happening. In this case it is all about deciding how doctrine in general, and specific doctrines, should play a more contextually authentic and inspiring role in our worship, mission and discipleship, and then resolving to make those changes. This is best done as a collaborative exercise so that we can support each other in these changes and hold each other to the commitments we make.

The study guide will approach each area of doctrine through this three-step method. Within this, as mentioned, it will use a question and answer form of presentation, going through each section as a dialogue between the reader and the relevant statements. At each point the reader will be asked to move from reading and understanding to interpretation and practical expression. With this approach, furthermore, there is no single set of outcomes, for each group in its own context will find its own way of living out the doctrine it has received.

The quotations from Anglican and ecumenical texts will be printed in boxes, so that they stand out clearly. Information about the texts with bibliographical details will be given at the end of the study guide. Bon voyage!

(This article is a revised version of the introduction to *What Do Anglicans Believe? A Study Guide to Christian Doctrine from Anglican and Ecumenical Statements*, TEAC 2020. This study guide will be published on the Theological Education pages of the Anglican Communion website by the end of July 2020. Go to <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/theology/theological-education.aspx> Also in Portuguese, Spanish and French.

The Church: further reading

What can we say together about the Church of the Triune God in order to grow in communion, to struggle together for justice and peace in the world, and to overcome together our past and present divisions? ***The Church: Towards a Common Vision*** (2013) offers a remarkable answer to this question. Produced by theologians from the widest range of Christian traditions and cultures, *The Church* addresses first the Church's mission, unity, and its being in the Trinitarian life of God. It then addresses our growth in communion – in apostolic faith, sacramental life, and ministry – as churches called to live in and for the world. Online at: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/faith-and-order/i-unity-the-church-and-its-mission/the-church-towards-a-common-vision>

What kind of body is the Anglican Communion? How do its constituent parts relate to each other? What is the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury? What place does the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting have within it? ***Towards a Symphony of Instruments*** (2015) answers these questions, looking at the various constituted structures that facilitate the common life of the Communion, called the 'Instruments of Communion'. As the paper says, such polity 'is a proper concern of the Church, deserving of its best study and reflection.' (1.14) This paper provides excellent instruction on all this for all theological students. <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/209979/Towards-a-Symphony-of-Instruments-Web-Version.pdf> Portuguese translation from pau-lo.ueti@anglicancommunion.org Spanish and French translations are on the way.

Links to Free Resources

Directory of Open Access Journals <https://doaj.org/>

Google Scholar <https://scholar.google.co.uk/>

Journal of Theological Librarianship <https://theolib.atla.com/theolib>

Search the Open Digital Theological Library <https://opendigttheolib.on.worldcat.org/discovery>

Theological Book Network <https://www.theologicalbooknetwork.org/>

The Post-Reformation Digital Library <http://www.prdl.org/>

eVitabu – African Pastors Fellowship <http://www.africanpastors.org/evitabu/>

Christian Study Library <http://christianstudylibrary.org/>

Christian Classics Ethereal Library <http://www.ccel.org/>

Audio and visual versions of the Bible <https://live.bible.is/bible/ENGESV/MAT/1>

Access to ancient manuscripts around the world <https://digital-scriptorium.org/>

Theological articles and books <https://theologyontheweb.org.uk/>

Bible in the Life of the Church <http://www.bilc.org>

Langham Publishing offers a library grant and a book programme with opportunities to order resources outside their own catalogue. More information from literture@langham.org

Globethics Foundation: theological institutions of the Anglican Communion have membership of this body through the Anglican Communion office. The online library has more than 10,000 theological texts free to download: www.globethics.net/library/home

The Foundation can provide online facilitation for workgroups: www.globethics.net/research/workgroups and online teaching tools: www.globethics.net/globethics-academy

The Global Handbook on Theological Education is available at http://www.ocms.ac.uk/regnum/downloads/Handbook_of_Theological_Education-Watermarked.pdf

Tearfund resources: General - <https://learn.tearfund.org/> Resources on church and community - https://learn.tearfund.org/en/themes/church_and_community/

The Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life (OCRPL) is organising a virtual workshop from 27-29 July on online theological education in Africa. You can register through the following website: <https://forms.gle/ghMNofsk4qPwqHdTA>. For more information contact Dr Joshva John at joshva.john@ocrpl.org. If you can assist as a speaker or know leaders who are involved in online theological education or who might have expertise in this area, please contact Dr John as well.

The Li Tim-Oi Foundation

Can we help you?

The Li Tim-Oi Foundation was established in 1994 in honour of the Reverend Dr Florence Li Tim-Oi, the first Anglican woman to be ordained to the priesthood. The Foundation exists to enable Anglican women in the Two Third's world to receive support for training.

In the past 26 years, the Foundation has given grants to over 500 women for training as priests, evangelists, youth and community workers, nurses, teachers and theological advisors, to name but a few of the qualifications gained. Many have become leaders in their churches, dioceses, and communities.

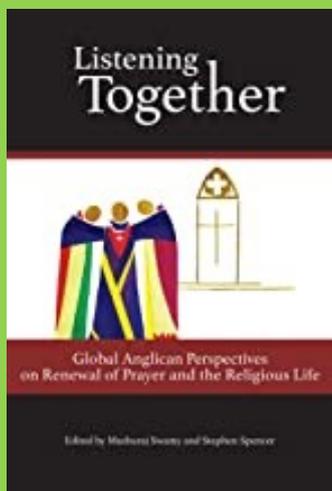
The Foundation now wishes to expand its geographical

reach to include more Provinces of the Anglican Communion. It currently receives many applications from countries in East Africa and is now interested in receiving applications from India, Asia, South America, the Caribbean, and other places within the Communion.

If you know of women who would benefit from support for training, please contact the Foundation, or pass on the contact details to the women or their bishops.

in a diocese that may be interested in partnering with the Foundation in support of women, please also get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you. For further information contact: Mrs Stephanie Lewis-Grey, Executive Secretary Email: admin@LTOF.org.uk Telephone: +44 (0)1323 - 819 - 313 Website: <https://www.ltof.org.uk>

Ebook just published:



Listening Together: Global Anglican Perspectives on the Renewal of Prayer and the Religious Life. Edited by Muthuraj Swamy and Stephen Spencer. The third in the 'Preparing for Lambeth' series, published by Forward Movement, available from **Amazon.co.uk**
ASIN: B086N2PFNM £6.45 (\$8 from Amazon.com)

Also available from Amazon.co.uk

Walking Together: Global Anglican Perspectives on Reconciliation
ASIN: B07S588ZZK £3.99 (\$8 from Amazon.com)

Witnessing Together : Global Anglican Perspectives on Evangelism
ASIN: B07SGFYFVC £3.99 (\$8 from Amazon.com)

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in English, Spanish and Portuguese

November 2019

Education for Discipleship

in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese

March 2020

Reading the Bible in Context

in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese

<https://www.anglicancommunion.org/theology/theological-education.aspx>

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