

The Christian Community



**A unique
opportunity**

Contents

Introduction	3
Vision and Purpose	4
Why a Christian Community?	5
How does it all work?	9
Frequently asked Questions	10
Christian Community Covenant	13
Christian Community Constitution	14
General Synod Stature 749	18
Application Form	22

Imagine the future where...

- Our identity is secured.
- Our theological integrity is assured.
- Our resources are secured.
- Our leadership in mission is granted.

Imagine the future where Anglicans:

- proclaim their faith without compromise;
- proclaim the Gospel confidently;
- are distinct within yet fully part of the local Diocese;
- remain loyal members of the Anglican Church in ANZ&P;
- maintain fellowship with those in the new Anglican expression.

**...all of this authorised by
General Synod / Te Hinota Whanui**



Our Vision

A strong, growing, united, healthy,
flourishing, Biblically-orthodox community
of Ministry Units and individuals.

Our Purpose

To promote the saving grace of Jesus Christ
through effective disciple-making and
Kingdom-enlarging communities;

AND

To protect the theological
convictions of its affiliates.

Why a Christian Community?

May 2018 will be a significant date in the history of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia.

The decision of General Synod (GS) to bless those in same-gender relationships has for many been a step too far. A line has been crossed and sadly for us all, many of these colleagues have disaffiliated from the Anglican Church in New Zealand. Some have left the Anglican Church and have joined other denominations. Many have struggled with the decision but have decided to remain. Still others have been disappointed that the decision did not go far enough.

The General Synod acknowledged these deep divisions and asked how we could continue to journey together with integrity.

The 2018 decisions of GS provide a “tool box” of ideas designed to enable this to happen; one of which was the idea of Christian Communities.

So why is AFFIRM setting up a Christian Community?

The Christian Community AFFIRM is helping to set up is designed for those who uphold the traditional teaching that all sexual activity is to be within a marriage between a man and a woman, as reaffirmed by resolution i10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference of Bishops called together by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Christian Community will focus on the underlying issues that affect the whole mission of the Church rather than simply one issue.

It is always necessary for the Church to engage with the culture in which it is situated. However, it has been the concern of many Christians for some time that the Church is compromising the teaching of the scriptures and therefore ceasing to be a counter-cultural community, and the “salt” and “light” that it is called to be. More than 20 years ago, AFFIRM was set up to grapple with these concerns.

AFFIRM has been given the opportunity to set up a Christian Community. This Christian Community is far more concerned to find how we present the good news to an increasingly hostile world than to focus on one issue within it. We also believe that many more cultural issues will attempt to challenge the Church’s accepted teaching in the years to come. We believe that it is possible to be faithful to the teaching of scripture and yet gain a hearing for the good news without compromise. Therefore, the Bible will remain the final authority for us.

We believe that our responsibility is to minister, speak and act in the love and grace of God. We recognise and regret that the historic attitude of the church to many people and issues, including the L.G.B.T community, has not always reflected the love and grace that God extends to everyone. We will continue to grapple with how to minister effectively to those whom God brings into our orbit as we reach out, no matter what their lifestyle. However, we will retain the touchstone of moral and ethical righteousness to be that which is revealed in the Bible and consider that to be orthodox. We will teach the transformative power and love of God to create Christ-likeness firstly from within and then outwardly in our actions. Our love and acceptance will continue, but contrary to the world’s view, to say “no” to any particular sin does not mean we do not care.

General Synod 2018 gives every Ministry Unit three options.

1. To stay (and continue to drift with the culture).
2. To leave the Anglican Church.
3. To stay as part of the new Biblically faithful network.

The Christian Community is for those who choose option three.



Our Vision

A strong, growing, united, healthy, flourishing, Biblically-orthodox community of Ministry Units and individuals.

The Objects of The Christian Community are:

To promote the saving grace of Jesus Christ through effective disciple making and Kingdom enlarging communities;

AND

To provide its affiliates and members with:

Protection of their Anglican theological convictions

Episcopal support and advocacy

Clerical and lay leadership

A pathway to Holy Orders for individual members

How does it all work?

Canon 38 allows an affiliated Ministry Unit to keep its assets within its Diocese under its Diocesan Bishop AND relate in a supportive network of like-minded people including the support and advocacy of a like-minded Bishop.

Affiliation and Membership

A Ministry Unit may affiliate with the Community by the resolution of a duly constituted congregational meeting; provided that the decision is passed by a two-thirds majority.

Individuals may also join. Affiliation or membership requires assent to the Christian Community Covenant.

Clergy Succession

No Clergy person shall be licenced to lead an affiliated Ministry Unit unless he or she is a member, or otherwise subscribes to the beliefs and discipline of the Community by signed assent to the Christian Community Covenant.

The Protector Bishop

The spiritual leader of the Community will be a Protector Bishop of this Church chosen by the Convocation of the Christian Community. The Protector will support and advocate for the affiliates and members of the Community, including the appointment of clergy.

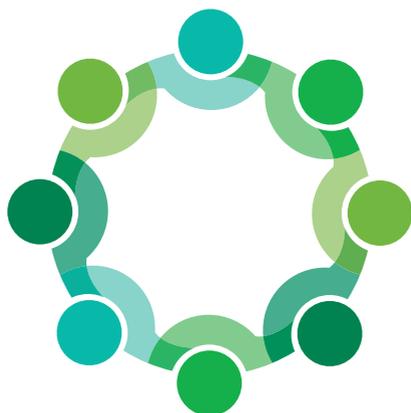
In matters of discipline involving the Diocesan Bishop the Protector shall act as advocate and supporter.

Community Support

The Community will provide a network for support for personal ministry, prayer, scholarship and ongoing training and encouragement.

Convocation and Representation

An annual Convocation of the Community will consist of equal clerical and lay representation from each affiliate and provide for the representation of individual members. The Convocation will elect a Standing Committee, establish an annual budget and set an annual contribution for each affiliated Ministry Unit and member.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the relationship of the Christian Community with the Diocesan Bishop and the rest of the Diocese?

A: Any Ministry Unit or individual that chooses to be part of the Christian Community will remain as before. We still pay our quota, attend Synod and relate as normal to the rest of the Diocese. The only change regarding the Diocese is that we would have made a clear statement on what the theological position of the parish is, and we have been promised that, this position will be protected and respected by those who carry responsibility and power in the Church.

Q: Can the Diocesan Bishop/s still visit a Christian Community Ministry Unit?

A: Yes. He/she/they remain our Bishop/s.

Q: Why join a Christian Community now?

A: This Church has debated this issue for the past 40 years and is still divided on it. There has been ample opportunity at the parish and diocesan level to discuss it. While one Bishop has stated that in his opinion, the recent General Synod decision is a trajectory that

the Church has set, the General Synod decision to allow Christian Communities means that we do not have to follow that trajectory. A stand for traditional Biblical-orthodoxy can be taken and accepted alongside other views.

Q: Why can't we stay as we are and not make any choices?

A: If we stay as we are in danger of joining the drift towards a culture dominated by Secular Humanism, and a growing powerlessness in the presentation of the Gospel message.

Q: If the local Ministry Unit votes with a 2/3 majority in favour of the C.C. what is the relationship with the remaining 1/3?

A: The relationship remains the same: acceptance, love, understanding, working together for the good of the whole congregation; and ministry to the wider community.

Q: What is the attitude towards those who are of a homosexual orientation?

A: All people are loved by God and welcome to our churches and will be treated with love and respect as those bearing the image of God. (See Christian Community Covenant which is in accord with the decision of the 1998 Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops from around the world.)

Q: What support and protection are given for those who wish to remain celibate?

A: The voices of these people are largely unheard. The Christian Community will provide a welcoming place for them to stand as full members of the Christian Community.

Q: What about the single, divorced, and widowed in our local congregations?

A: The Church needs to work at the way singles, divorced and widowed people are given opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of the Church's life and find rich and fulfilling relationships.

Q: What is the benefit of a Ministry Unit joining the Christian Community?

A: There are four benefits.

1. The theological position of the parish is protected. No one can be appointed as the new vicar who does not hold this position and if they change their mind on the issue, they will need to resign.
2. It provides a pathway to ordination for those who hold a conservative viewpoint on this issue.
3. It provides the Ministry Unit with an advocate if any dispute were to arise between the Diocese and the Ministry Unit.
4. It provides an opportunity for like-minded Ministry Units / individuals across the country to come together to pray, offer support and training; and to develop new mission initiatives and resources to improve our call and mandate for discipleship and mission.

Q: What if we join and find that after a couple of years it's not for us?

A: All that is required is a 51% majority agreeing at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting.

Q: What is the relationship with those who have a different theological perspective in the Diocese?

A: The Christian Community, while being clear where it stands Biblically, will remain open to dialogue with all, always seeking to discern the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Christian Community Covenant

The purpose of the Christian Community is to promote the saving grace of Jesus Christ through effective disciple-making and Kingdom-enlarging communities; AND to protect the theological conviction of its affiliates and members.

We uphold the creedal beliefs of the Anglican Church, and affirm:

- a. the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the Church and the world;
- b. the supreme authority of the Bible as God's living word to all;
- c. the Holy Spirit's gifting of all Christian women and men for their varied ministries;
- d. the centrality of evangelism, personal conversion, and discipleship for the mission of the Church;

Concerning human sexuality (see Lambeth 1998 Resolution 1:10), we:

- e. affirm the teaching of the Bible which upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage;
- f. recognise that there are among us people who experience themselves as having a homosexual orientation who are seeking to live their lives in obedience to the Bible in the power of the Spirit. While rejecting homosexual practice as incompatible with the Bible, we commit ourselves to minister sensitively to all, irrespective of sexual orientation, and assure them that they are loved by God;
- g. cannot declare God's blessing upon same-sex unions, nor support the ordination of individuals in such unions.

The Christian Community Constitution

Purpose

1. **The Christian Community (The Community) is a Christian Community within the meaning of Canon XXXVIII of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia (The Province); The Purpose of The Community is to promote the saving grace of Jesus Christ through effective disciple-making and Kingdom-enlarging communities; AND to protect the theological conviction of its affiliates and members.**

Belief and Theological Conviction

2. The Doctrine of The Community is expressed in: The Formularies, and the Constitution / Te Pouhere of the Anglican Church of The Province of Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia (ACANZP) 1992, AND the Christian Community Covenant,
3. Noting and agreeing that, “The Church has received and articulated an understanding of intimate human relationships which it expresses through her doctrine of marriage between a man and a woman, and is life-long and monogamous. We uphold this traditional doctrine of marriage” (61st General Synod 2014 Motion 30).
4. The Community recognises the Te Tiriti o Waitangi and is committed to the partnership between the Tikanga created by Te Pouhere.
5. Affiliation or membership of The Community requires assent to The Christian Community Covenant (Appendix I).

Objects

6. The Objects of The Community are to:
 - a) promote the saving grace of Jesus Christ through effective disciple-making and Kingdom-enlarging communities;

- b) advocate for orthodoxy within ACANZP.
- AND to provide its affiliates and members with:
- c) protection of their Anglican theological conviction;
 - d) episcopal support and advocacy;
 - e) clerical and lay leadership;
 - f) a pathway to Holy Orders for individual members.

Affiliation and membership

7. A ministry unit may affiliate with The Community by the resolution of a duly constituted congregational meeting; providing that the decision is passed with a two-thirds majority and is confirmed in writing over the signatures of the Churchwardens and the Vicar/Priest in charge.
8. Ministry units may disaffiliate using the procedure required to disaffiliate in Canon XXXVIII.
9. Individuals may join The Community by either written or online application, including their affirmation of The Christian Community Covenant. Clergy applications shall be approved by the Standing Committee of the Convocation. Individual resignation from The Community shall be in writing.
10. No person may be appointed as Dean; Vicar or Co-Vicar of a Local Ministry and Mission Unit / Minita-a-Rohe; Chaplain / Taiparani; Warden / Kaihautu; Missioner; Deacon / Priest in-Charge; Local Priest / Deacon / Minita-a-Iwi of that Ministry Unit unless he or she is a member, or otherwise subscribes to the beliefs and discipline of the Community by signed assent to the Christian Community Covenant, except that where the appointment is for an interim period any clergy person may be appointed by agreement with the Ministry Unit.

The Protector

11. The Protector of The Community shall be a Bishop in active Episcopal ministry in this Church chosen by the Convocation of the Christian Community.
12. The Protector will support and advocate for the affiliates and members of The Community, including the appointment of clergy, and shall act as the spiritual leader of The Community.
13. In matters of discipline involving the Diocesan Bishop the Protector shall act as advocate and supporter.

14. The Protector shall serve as the arbiter within the Christian Community in matters which the members of The Community cannot resolve using normal processes.
15. In matters of Discipline of clergy and license holders internal to the Christian Community The Protector will use the procedures of Title D of the Canons of the Church.

The Convocation and Representation

16. An annual Convocation of The Community shall be held consisting of equal clerical and lay representation from each affiliated ministry unit and provide for the representation of individual members.
17. The formal business of the Convocation shall be conducted initially according to the Standing Orders of the Diocese of Nelson as of 2017.
18. The annual Convocation shall elect a Standing Committee consisting of four clerical and four lay members, together with any bishops of The Community. The term of appointment shall be for two years, with one half of the clergy and lay membership retiring each year, but being eligible for re-election.
19. The annual Convocation of the Community may establish an annual budget and set an annual contribution for each member ministry unit.
20. The Convocation of The Community may liaise with the Protector to nominate a candidate for the office of Assistant Bishop to the Protector for the purposes of The Community.
21. This Constitution may be amended by the Convocation of The Community by a two-thirds majority, but only if notice of the proposed amendment has been sent to affiliated ministry units and members not less than 60 days before the meeting of the Convocation and the reactions received are fully reported to the Convocation.

Dissolution

Any property or assets owned by The Community upon its dissolution shall be given, sold or distributed to any similar Anglican organisation upholding the theological conviction of The Community.

Appendices

Appendix I: The Christian Community Covenant

The Purpose of The Christian Community is to promote the saving grace of Jesus Christ through effective disciple-making and Kingdom enlarging communities; AND to protect the theological conviction of its affiliates and members.

We uphold the creedal beliefs of the Anglican Church, and affirm:

- a. The Lordship of Jesus Christ over the church and the world,
- b. The supreme authority of The Bible as God's living word to all,
- c. The Holy Spirit's gifting of all Christian women and men for their varied ministries,
- d. The centrality of evangelism, personal conversion, and discipleship for the mission of the church.

Concerning human sexuality (see Lambeth 1998 Resolution I:10) we:

- e. Affirm the teaching of The Bible which upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage,
- f. recognise that there are among us people who experience themselves as having a homosexual orientation who are seeking to live their lives in obedience to The Bible in the power of The Spirit. While rejecting homosexual practice as incompatible with The Bible, we commit ourselves to minister sensitively to all, irrespective of sexual orientation, and assure them that they are loved by God,
- g. cannot declare God's blessing upon same sex unions, nor support the ordination of individuals in such unions.

Founder Members having signed 25 October 2018 are:

Mr Bill Capamagian, Tauranga

Capt Peter Lloyd, Auckland

Rev Matt Watts, Christchurch

Rev Dr Dale Williamson, Tauranga

Rev Joanne Latham, Christchurch

Rev Paul Williamson, Tauranga

Rev Sister Lorraine Lloyd, Auckland

Statute 749

The Title B Canon XXXVIII “Of the recognition of Christian Communities” Statute, 2018

Whereas, General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui in 2016 carried Motion 29 asking the Primates to establish a working group to consider possible structural arrangements within the Church to safeguard both theological convictions concerning the blessing of same gender relationships; and

Whereas, that working group in its final report made a number of recommendations including the introduction of a new canon in Title B “Of the recognition of Christian Communities”; and

Whereas, General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui considers it desirable to implement the recommendations of that working group including the enactment of Title B Canon XXXVIII in the manner recommended by that working group,

The General Synod/te Hīnota Whānui enacts as follows:

1. **Title.** The Title of this Statute is *The Title B Canon XXXVIII “Of the recognition of Christian Communities” Statute, 2018.*
2. **Purpose.** To give effect to the recommendations of the Motion 29 working group by enacting a new Title B Canon XXXVIII to provide for the recognition of Christian Communities and for the affiliation of Ministry Units with them.
3. **Commencement.** This Bill comes into effect at the close of the session of General Synod/ Te Hīnota Whānui at which it is passed but only provided that Bills 20 to 24 (Statutes 747-751) are also passed at the same session failing which this Bill will lapse.
4. A new Title B Canon XXXVIII ‘Of the recognition of Christian Communities’ is enacted as follows:

Purpose: *The purpose of this Canon is to provide for the recognition of Christian Communities and for the affiliation of Ministry Units with them.*

PART 1: Definition of Christian Communities

1. *Christian Communities that may be recognised by this Church are societies of Christians who voluntarily commit themselves to obedience to their Rule and Constitution.*

2. *The implementation of this Canon must occur in a manner consistent with clause 1 Part D, clause 1 Part E and clause 1 Part F of Te Pouhere/the Constitution, be in accordance with tikanga within each Tikanga and any allocation of resources of the Church to a Christian Community recognised under this Canon must recognise mana whenua.*

PART 2: Requirements for Recognition

3. *To be recognised a Christian Community must:*
 - a) *have at least six members;*
 - b) *be approved by the General Synod/Te Hinota Whanui or, if it is not in session, by the General Synod Standing Committee, at the request of the Christian Community;*
 - c) *have a Visitor or Protector, to act as supporter and advocate for the Christian Community within the Church, who must be a Bishop in active Episcopal ministry in this Church and may also have Bishops in active ministry in this Church as Assistants to the Visitor or Protector;*
 - d) *have a constitution that provides for:*
 - i) *a statement of belief consistent with the beliefs of this Church;*
 - ii) *recognition of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Pouhere;*
 - iii) *the Visitor or Protector to serve as the arbiter in matters which the members of the Christian Community cannot resolve through normal processes;*
 - iv) *the ability for members to participate in the governance of the Christian Community;*
 - v) *the discipline of members;*
 - vi) *the ability for members to resign;*
 - vii) *the legal ownership and administration of the temporal possessions of the Christian Community in the event of its dissolution of its assets in accordance with the law applying to the disposition of the assets of the charities in the jurisdiction in which it is based.*

4. *The requirements at clause 3(d)(i) does not prevent the recognition of Christian Communities whose rules or constitutions contain statements of belief or expectations of personal behavior that are beyond those contained in the Formularies, the Constitution/Te Pouhere and the Canons of the Church provided that they are not inconsistent with the Formularies.*
5. *Recognition of a Christian Community under this canon does not make that Christian Community a Ministry Unit.*
6. *The General Synod/Te Hintoa Whanui or, if it is not in session, the General Synod Standing Committee may withdraw the recognition of a Christian Community.*
7. *Any minister who is a member of a Christian Community is still subject to the jurisdiction of this Church and the minister's licensing Bishop.*

PART 3: Affiliation with Ministry Units

8. *Ministry Units within this Church may affiliate with a Christian Community recognised under this canon.*
9. *The Constitution of a recognised Christian Community may, but need not, provide for the consequences of the affiliation of a Ministry Unit to the life of that Christian Community.*
10. *Affiliation occurs when two thirds of those present and entitled to vote at a general meeting (or equivalent) of the Ministry Unit, convened and conducted in accordance with the rules governing the procedure of such meeting, vote to affiliate.*
11. *Disaffiliation occurs when a majority of those present and entitled to vote at a general meeting (or equivalent) of the Ministry Unit, convened and conducted in accordance with the rules governing the procedure of such meeting, vote to disaffiliate.*
12. *If a Ministry Unit affiliates with a Christian Community then no person may be appointed as Dean; Vicar or Co-Vicar of a Local Ministry and Mission Unit / Minita-a-Rohe; Chaplain / Taiparani; Warden / Kaihautu; Missioner; Deacon / Priest-in-Charge; Local Priest / Deacon / Minita-a-lwi of that Ministry Unit unless he or she is a member, or otherwise subscribes to the beliefs and discipline, of the Christian Community that the Ministry Unit is affiliated to, except that where the appointment is for an interim period any clergy person may be appointed by agreement with the Ministry Unit.*

13. *Clause 12 does not and will not operate to deprive any Ordained Minister of Ecclesiastical Office.*

We certify that this Statute was passed by the General Synod/ te Hīnota Whānui on 10 May 2018. As witnessed by our hands 29 May 2018.



W Halapua
Primate and Archbishop



P Richardson
Primate and Archbishop



D Tamihere
Primate and Archbishop

Application Form for Ministry Unit Affiliation and Individual Membership

Parish or Ministry Unit

Diocese or Hui Amorangi

Resolution of the Congregational Meeting

Date of Resolution

Your name

Email

Signatures

Vicar/Priest in Charge

Date

Church Wardens

Date

Church Wardens

Date

Individual Membership

Your name

Email

Address

**I assent to the
Christian Community
Covenant**
(please tick)

Phone

Signature

Forward application to lorraineandpete@gmail.com or post to:
3 John Road, Stanmore Bay, Auckland 0932.

