

Cornerstone Church Colchester – Declaration of Principles (Doctrinal Distinctives)

The Declaration of Principles includes text taken from the 1873 Declaration of Principles written by Bishop Cummins, William Muhlenberg's 1854 Exposition of the Memorial and the 1870 Preamble and Declaration of the Church of Ireland.

The Declaration of Principles

1. This Church declares its belief in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God, and the sole Rule of Faith and Practice; in the creed "commonly called the Apostle's Creed"; in the Divine institution of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and in the Doctrines of grace substantially as they are set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, as per our Basis of Faith.
2. This Church recognises and adheres to Episcopacy, not as of Divine Right, but as a very ancient and desirable form of Church polity.
3. This Church, retaining a Liturgy which shall not be repressive of freedom in prayer, accepts the Book of Common Prayer, as it was revised, prepared and recommended for use by the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, A.D. 1785, reserving full liberty to alter, abridge, enlarge and amend the same, as may seem most conducive to the edification of the people, "provided that the substance of the faith be kept entire".
4. This Church condemns and rejects the following erroneous and strange doctrines as contrary to God's Word:
 - First: That the Church of Christ exists only in one order or form of ecclesiastical polity;
 - Second: That Christian Ministers are "priests" in another sense than that in which all believers are "a royal priesthood";
 - Third: That the Lord's Table is an altar on which the oblation of the Body and Blood of Christ is offered anew to the Father;
 - Fourth: That the Presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper is a presence in the elements of Bread and Wine;
 - Fifth: That Regeneration is inseparably connected with Baptism.

In accordance with the liberty given in clause 3 of the above Declaration of Principles, this Church accepts the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England, with such revisions as shall exclude sacerdotal doctrines and practices.

This Church, as a Reformed and Protestant Church, doth hereby re-affirm its constant witness against all those innovations in Doctrine and Worship whereby the primitive Faith hath been from time to time defaced or overlaid, and which at the Reformation were disowned and rejected.

This Church will maintain communion with all Christian Churches, and will set forward, so far as in it lies, quietness, peace and love, among all Christian people.