

Comprehensive Anglican Identity and Purpose

How Do I Strengthen My Faith Community's Representation of Anglican Comprehensiveness in Communications?

Parish internal and external communications are an ideal place to embed regular and consistent messages about our distinctive identity as an Anglican diocese within the Communion. In recent times Anglicans have felt a need to downplay our denominational title of 'Anglican' to emphasise our title as 'Christian'. This has led us to shy away from fully telling our story – a narrative that began well before Henry VIII! With a realistic appraisal of our strengths and weaknesses, and the high and low points of our historical journey from the third century Celtic Christian missionaries in Britain, we have a story to tell to the communities that we are part of, with distinctiveness, clarity and passion.

In preparing these resources, parish web sites, mission plans and Facebook pages were reviewed for their communication of comprehensive Anglican identity and purpose. A list of markers for considering comprehensive Anglicanism was established. Useful examples from various parishes across the diocese and other sources were collected.

The entries below follow the comprehensive Anglicanism indicators under the headings of Identity, Anglican Purpose and Relationships, which are simply used to structure the markers in a logical format. For each indicator a number of links to useful examples have been provided. Parish leaders are encouraged to peruse these and consider which may assist them embed comprehensive Anglicanism more explicitly in their internal and external communications.

Below is a summary of the Anglican comprehensiveness markers. Following this will be a table of example resources for each marker, and some notes on how and where within the web site and other communications this indicator can be introduced or expanded. In general, it's valuable to ensure that these elements infuse all of the web site, rather than just being referenced on one web site page.

Comprehensiveness Markers

1 Identity

- a) Obvious designation as “Anglican” and Anglican Church Southern Qld logo included
- b) Acknowledgement of historical nature of Anglican Church and Historic theological streams articulated
- c) Scripture, tradition, reason and experience valued
- d) Pattern of church calendar and lectionary of readings
- e) Worship in word and sacrament as both important
- f) Role of sacred space/place in worship and devotion?
- g) Commitment to authorised Anglican liturgy
- h) Sacramental ministry

2 Anglican Purpose

- a) Each of the five marks of mission listed
- b) Engagement with local community groups, issues, leaders, events and needs
- c) Engaging and discerning social issues through scripture, reason, tradition and service
- d) Engagement with cultural life of the community (art, music, and the like)

3 Relationships

- a) Anglican Communion / Anglican Church of Australia
- b) Anglican Church Southern Qld
- c) Archbishop and Bishops
- d) Parish Council and other decision-making structures linked with the Diocese
- e) Anglican Mission Agencies
- f) Anglican Schools and/or Anglicare

4 Affirming, Engaging and Embracing Theological Comprehensiveness

1 Identity

- a) Obvious designation as “Anglican” and Anglican Church Southern Qld logo included

The Anglican Church Southern Qld ideally should be prominent on the Home Page.

EXAMPLES

- <https://dioceseofbrisbane.sharepoint.com/sites/TheAnglicanResourceCommunity/SitePages/Marketing.aspx>



- b) Acknowledgement of historical nature of Anglican Church and Historic theological streams articulated

- It's worth considering having a page dedicated to this (eg “What is Anglicanism?” or “Why be Anglican?”).
- This section could be linked to the Home page.
- The section could also be linked to a page welcoming newcomers.
- This section provides an opportunity to trace the Anglican Church’s roots back to the third century travelling Celtic Christian missionaries in Britain and to articulate the theological streams still evident today that have emerged since then.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.anglicanmaroochydore.org.au/introduction/our-faith/being-anglican/>
- <https://stjohnsbulimba.org/the-church/>
- <http://www.stpauls.net.au/what-we-believe.html>
- <https://www.anglicanchurchsq.org.au/being-anglican>

- c) Scripture, tradition, reason and experience valued

This theme could be included in a ‘Home’ or ‘About Us’ page, as is the case in the examples below.

EXAMPLES

- <https://stjohnsbulimba.org/the-church/>
- <https://www.stthomastoowong.org.au/about-us>

d) Pattern of church calendar and lectionary of readings

- These themes could be referenced in a “Resources” section/page.
- Consider explaining the concept of a church calendar with different seasons and colours, as a way of ensuring that as faith communities we celebrate and lament the full range of experiences within communal life.
- It is worth expanding on the principle that the lectionary ensures we comprehensively cover scripture, and not just return to our favoured sections.

EXAMPLES

- <https://christchurchanglican.org/anglican-faith/seasons/>
- <http://anglicancompass.com/what-time-is-it-an-overview-of-the-church-calendar-and-liturgical-year/>
- <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/daily.php?year=C>

e) Worship in word and sacrament as both important

The word ‘sacrament’ is not well known in daily language and needs to be explained.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.stpetersbribe.org.au/worship/>
- <https://www.anglicanmaroochydore.org.au/worship-services/>
- Additional paragraph from Tania Eichler, Maroochydore:

We express our understanding of the mystery of God using more than words – we use sign, symbol, and ritual. We value the Word (Bible) and Sacraments (an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace, e.g., the bread and wine). We have such a rich history and tradition that joins us with the stories of old into the new stories of our faith today. The rhythm and flow of our lives, worship and service, is centred in our relationship with God, revealed in Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

f) Role of sacred space/place in worship and devotion?

- Parishes may be limited in inviting people to access their worship and ministry centre during the week, depending on availability of on-site workers and resulting ability to keep facilities open at these times.
- Where access is available outside of worship times, there is the opportunity to promote practices involving utilising sacred space (eg meditation, prayer walks, time out with God).
- Where access is mainly only available, use of sacred space before worship can be promoted (eg quiet meditation in a side chapel, labyrinth walk).

EXAMPLES

- <https://aspley-albanycreek.org.au/ministries/spiritual-development/meditation/>
- <https://www.stjohnscathedral.com.au/spirituality/meditation/>

g) Commitment to authorised Anglican liturgy

- The ordering of worship through prayer book liturgies is a strength of Anglicanism and can be expressed as such in parish communications.
- As well as describing the various worship services available, web sites can summarise the basic shape of the liturgy for Holy Communion and other services, so that worshipers can have a better understanding and appreciation of this.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.stpetersbribe.org.au/worship/>
- <https://stmarksclayfield.org/worship-2/>

h) Sacramental ministry

Parish web sites use various titles for web site pages that cover their sacramental ministries of baptism, weddings and funerals, such as: 'Connection', 'Services', 'Ministries' and 'Life Events'.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.stlukestoowoomba.org.au/connection/>
- <https://www.stpaulsips.org.au/ministries>
- <https://stbarts.com.au/services>
- <https://robinaanglican.com/baptism-weddings-funerals/>

2 Anglican Purpose

a) Each of the five marks of mission

- The Marks of Mission provide a helpful summary of the Anglican Church's mission in the world:
 1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom - **TELL**
 2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers - **TEACH**
 3. To respond to human need by loving service - **TEND**
 4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation - **TRANSFORM**
 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth - **TREASURE.**

- Various summaries are given for the Marks of Mission, eg: tell, teach, tend, transform and treasure.
- Some of the Marks of Mission are more self-explanatory than others for someone being introduced to them for the first time (eg “To respond to need through loving service”).
- The majority of the Marks of Mission have terms that need to be explained – such as the underlined words above.

EXAMPLES

- <https://stbarts-specialmedia.s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/VISION2025.pdf>
- <https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=https://www.annunciation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/210707-updated-MAP.pdf&hl=en>

b) Engagement with local community groups, issues, leaders, events and needs

- Parish web sites use various titles for these sections, including ‘Ministries’ and ‘Parish Events’.

EXAMPLES

- <https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=https://www.annunciation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/210707-updated-MAP.pdf&hl=en>
- <http://ststephenscoorparoo.com/community/st-stephens-goes-solar/>
- <https://www.st-andrews.org.au/our-ministries/outreach-activities/>
- <https://stjohnswishart.com.au/join-us/#commchap>

c) Engaging and discerning social issues through scripture, reason, tradition and service

- By keeping the web site and other parish communications sourced with responses to current issues, parishes are more likely to engage people seeking spiritual guidance on the social issues concerning them.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.stlukestoowoomba.org.au/faith/issues-to-explore/>
- <https://www.stlukestoowoomba.org.au/faith/more-issues-to-explore/>
- <https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=https://www.annunciation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/210707-updated-MAP.pdf&hl=en>

d) Engagement with cultural life of the community (art, music, and the like)

- Parishes host various activity in this space, such as art shows and music concerts.
- These provide excellent opportunities to partner with secular cultural groups.
- Additionally, such events can be used to raise money, which may be donated to community service groups and/or strengthen partnerships with charities and mission agencies.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.anglican-stlucia.org/music/the-lucian-singers/>
- <http://www.stpauls.net.au/spadewerx.html>
- <https://stphilsrochedale.church/ministries/art-classes/>

3 Relationships

a) Anglican Communion / Anglican Church of Australia

- It is important to acknowledge that our faith community is part of a national collection of 23 diocese, and a worldwide Communion.
- The Compass Rose Shield is a useful graphic to include to represent the Communion.
- It is worth highlighting key elements of the Rose Shield:
 - Cross of St George, symbolising the historical origins of the Anglican Church;
 - Greek representation of the New Testament text “The truth shall make you free” (John 8:23) Compass points, representing worldwide nature of the Anglican Church; and,
 - Bishop’s mitre, indicating the centrality of Apostolic order for the Communion.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.stlukestoowoomba.org.au/>
- <https://www.stdavidschelmer.com.au/our-beliefs>
- <http://www.stpauls.net.au/what-we-believe.html>
- <https://aspley-albanycreek.org.au/about-us/our-church/focus-points/>



b) Anglican Church Southern Qld

- It is important that communications reflect that the parish is part of a body of Anglican Christians called a diocese, in this case the Anglican Church Southern Queensland.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.stlukestoowoomba.org.au/>
- <https://www.anglicanchurchsq.org.au/what-we-do>
- <https://www.anglicanchurchsq.org.au/who-we-are>

c) Archbishop and Bishops

- The website can give the name of the parish's regional bishop and perhaps include a photo of them.
- It can personalise the role of the bishop by providing a short welcome or reflection written by them.

EXAMPLES

- <http://www.stpauls.net.au/what-we-believe.html>
- <https://anglicanchurchnoosa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Vision-26-web.pdf>
- <https://www.anglicanchurchsq.org.au/who-we-are>

d) Parish Council and other decision-making structures linked with the Diocese

- Clarifying parish leadership structures, ideally with a picture of various leaders, is beneficial, perhaps on an "About Us/Our Team" or "Parish Leadership" page.
- How decisions are made within the faith community can be referenced in the same place, with a mention made of parish council, the annual general meeting and important committees or other decision-making groups and processes.
- Diocesan Synod and Diocesan Council can also be mentioned, however briefly, as important decision-making mechanisms.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.anglicanchurchsq.org.au/synod>
- <https://stgeorgesanglicanbeenleigh.org.au/meet-our-team.html>
- <http://maryborough.anglicanchurchsq.org.au/our-team/>
- <https://www.anglicannambour.com/executive-team-parish-council/>

e) Anglican Mission Agencies

- A general link to the ABM web site can be provided.
- If relevant, you can list any specific ABM projects your parish is involved with.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.stlukestoowoomba.org.au/international/>
- <https://www.anglicanherveybay.org.au/church-mission>
- <https://anglicanin4017.org.au/our-mission-work.html>

f) Anglican Schools and/or Anglicare

- A link to Anglicare Southern Queensland's web site can be included.
- Any local Anglicare programs or partnerships can also be specified.
- Even if there is no Anglican school near the parish, the diocese' emphasis on education can be alluded to and a link to the Anglican schools web page provided.

EXAMPLES

- <https://www.stlukestoowoomba.org.au/national/>
- <https://www.anglicanherveybay.org.au/fraser-coast-anglican-college>
- <https://anglicanin4017.org.au/our-mission-work.html>

4 Affirming, Engaging and Embracing Theological Comprehensiveness Exemplars

As a Diocese seeking to strengthen comprehensive Anglican identity and purpose, we seek to represent the richness of historic Catholic, Progressive and Evangelical expressions of Anglicanism. The following eight pieces have been submitted by ACSQ parish leaders as exemplars, describing how these threads are expressed in the life of the Diocese and the leaders' individual parishes. They are reproduced here as they were submitted - in their entirety - with reference to the author in each case and their parish.

- Not only have these streams been evidence ever since the early church, but embracing them is a sign of mature spirituality/faith.
- While you can emphasise the streams that your faith community identifies with the most, it's still important to mention all of the three theological streams as being part of the Diocese.

EXAMPLES

A. The 'Shape' of Comprehensiveness (Paul Mitchell, St Luke's Toowoomba).

Anglican Comprehensiveness has four theological streams: Catholic, Evangelical, Progressive and Charismatic. The fourth is present but has less emphasis than the other three in this Diocese.

The 'shape' created between these four themes is a triangular pyramid. Four threads, each drawing in a particular direction, and together creating a shape within which what we hold in common exists as the faith of the Anglican Church.

At the extremes of each thread is a narrowness which is expressed as exclusivity "If you do not believe 'this' / do 'this' then you are either not REALLY part of the Church or not really a Christian." ALL four threads have those extremes. Most of us exist in the shape between. This shape is Anglican comprehensiveness.

We all hold the Lambeth Quadrilateral (The Scriptures, the Creeds, the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion and the Historic Episcopate – locally adapted) yet HOW we hold these things differs. Any description of the four theological threads will be recognised by some of those who hold that perspective, yet many people will also want to add a BUT or an AND. Those who find themselves in each of the threads will also recognise what is said of others, and want to own those perspectives as well. This is also what gives comprehensiveness a shape rather than a single definition. We have different emphases yet most of what we hold, we share.

The Catholic thread emphasises continuity in the Church from its earliest expressions, particularly in liturgical practice. Right practice (orthopraxy) and right belief (orthodoxy) are determined by interrogating the historical documents and decisions of the Church universal, especially the Councils of the Church. The purpose of the Church is to be an expression of the presence of the Kingdom of God in the world.

The Evangelical thread emphasises the authority of the Scriptures as the measure for determining right belief and practice. The purpose of the Church is to be the means through which all humanity is presented with the message of salvation.

The Progressive thread emphasises the ongoing work of God in and through the development of human knowledge, bringing the continuing unfolding of all truth. The purpose of the Church is to be the place of embracing welcome and expression of God's love for the whole world.

The Charismatic thread emphasises the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in and through humanity, bringing inspiration, enthusiasm and challenge to full commitment. The purpose of the Church is to be alive to God, Father Son AND Holy Spirit and to be an expression of joy. These four threads together create the 'shape' of our faith in this Diocese.

B. Comprehensive Anglicanism (Imelda O'Loughlin, Banyo)

As an Anglican parish, we embrace the Christian commitment to all people seeing ourselves as part of the universal Church. In this way we may be described as "catholic." Scripture forms a vital part of our faith – hence we are "evangelical" in the sense that we focus on the good news of salvation as brought to us by Jesus Christ. And finally, our parish is indeed progressive in our willingness to question

tradition, to place a strong emphasis on social justice, and care of the poor and the oppressed. We welcome human diversity and accept our role in the environmental stewardship of the earth.

C. Comprehensive Anglicanism (Graham Warren TSSF, Nundah)

Our parish community is bound together by our commitment to a comprehensive expression of Anglicanism. This means that we are catholic or universal in our embrace of the traditions of the church back to the foundational creeds, evangelical in our outreach to honour the great commission to make disciples of all nations and progressive in that we honour the insights of science and deep learning to inform our understanding of the scriptures and traditions of the church. We are therefore, because of this commitment, a community to which all are welcome regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference or ability.

D. Anglican Church as Kaleidoscope (Stewart Perry, Robina)

There is jargon present in every part of life and there is jargon in the Anglican Church. "Comprehensive Anglicanism" has become part of our more recent vernacular. The terms: Catholic, Evangelical and Progressive have been around for much longer, however, they could mean little or nothing to you even if you were raised in the Anglican Church.

Here is one way of trying to make sense of these terms and how they fit together with Comprehensive Anglicanism.

The image of a 3-legged stool is often associated with the Anglican Church. Scripture, Reason and Tradition each provide a leg to balance the Church as a whole. It is of course... a generalisation. It would be wrong to say there is no Reason or Tradition in Scripture, scripture is full of both. It would equally be wrong to say that Reason is absent of Tradition and Scripture as it would be to say that Tradition is absent of Reason and Scripture.

This image is helpful, however, in helping us to understand some of the different expressions of Anglicanism that are labelled: Catholic, Evangelical and Progressive. In the Catholic stream you will often see Tradition clearly visible but that does not mean always or that Reason and Scripture are absent. In the Evangelical stream you will often see Scripture clearly visible but that does not mean always or that Reason and Tradition are absent. In the Progressive stream you will often see Reason clearly visible but that does not mean always or that Tradition and Scripture are absent.

St Paul, in his letters, uses the imagery of a body to help us understand that we cannot be all things to all people just by ourselves. We need the presence, gifts and talents, strengths and weaknesses of others to complete the unity of the body. This is not just true for a group of people gathering as a Church. It is also true for a grouping of Anglican Churches... and is also true for the grouping of denominations giving us the world-wide church.

We achieve true balance or true comprehensiveness when we recognise that the other parts help complete the story of what being an Anglican is...

E. God's Fingerprints in Science, Social Science & the Arts (Margaret Wesley, Ashgrove)

I don't think of the three strands as being legitimately separable. I see comprehensiveness as a maturity into which we are all growing - but because it requires a lot of maturity to hold the three strands together in our thinking, feeling and living, there is a tendency to unravel - which is heartbreaking but understandable.

We see God's fingerprints everywhere, so while we study the Bible and follow Anglican traditions, we also listen to science, social science, and the arts for the truths they reveal about our creator and ourselves. Listening to science in our time might lead us to support climate change mitigation, to re-evaluate gender and sexual binaries, and to humbly submit to medical advice during a pandemic. Willingness to learn from history leads us to support truth-telling, respect and justice for the first peoples of the lands now called Australia. We are open to change, to saying sorry, and to doing and being better each day, with God's help.

F. Jesus with Open Arms (Olaf Anderson, New Farm)

At the entrance of our parish church is a stained-glass window depicting Jesus with open arms. As inspiration, the artist who was commissioned to craft this window was given the passage from Matthew 11:28-30.

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light"

What's sort of space opens before us as we are approached by Jesus? A space where all are welcome. All? Yes ... all!

What does that mean? It means that people I do not agree with or even get along with are there alongside me. It means people I do not always understand are by my shoulder. In the presence of Jesus our human differences which we value so, melt away, and all that remains is our common humanity and the awareness that God's grace is unlike anything we have experienced.

The love that welcomes me extends to everyone. No one is left out!

The hope of the Christian community is to be a space of such a welcome, a space where we can find beauty in the ritual of worship, a space where we encounter a passion for social justice within every aspect of human endeavour, a space where we stand in awe as we hear from our sacred writings passed down to us from our ancestors.

We don't always do this well but that is no reason not to continue to strive to enact God's vision for us all, and our commitment to this work is both our task and also our gift.

G. Opening the Doors (Tania Eichler, Maroochydore)

Welcome to the Anglican Parish of Maroochydore in the Anglican Church of Southern Queensland. We are Christians who are a part of a Comprehensive Diocesan Community who seek to love God and love others as we journey through life together.

When we open the doors we say, "Here comes everyone". That's it, that everyone is welcome and valued. Expressions of how we express our faith, worship and service embrace this diversity. The importance of Christian community is key for spiritual nourishment, fellowship and growth. We have a mix of Catholic, Evangelical and Progressive views of the nature of God and how this plays out through our lives.

Catholic – We express our understanding of the mystery of God using more than words – we use sign, symbol, and ritual. We value the Word (Bible) and Sacraments (an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace, e.g., the bread and wine). We have such a rich history and tradition that joins us with the stories of old into the new stories of our faith today. The rhythm and flow of our lives, worship and service, is centred in our relationship with God, revealed in Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Evangelical – We express our understanding of God holding highly the word of God, authority of Scripture for knowledge of God and as guide to Christian living. The person and teachings of Jesus is central and can help us to be the disciples that Jesus calls us to be. It allows us to root our beliefs in the riches of the tradition of Christian thought and prayer that faithful followers of Jesus Christ have passed down to us. The Holy Spirit empowers us as we are obedient to Christ and opens us to daily conversion.

Progressive – We express our understanding of God in ways that calls us to respond to God's compassion and justice in our everyday lives in this world. This is both visionary and biblical. The heart of the mission of the Church is to explore together how best to act on what we discern the Spirit saying to the churches. We are seeking to generate new expressions of Church that are faithful to Jesus and responsive to God in the world. Community is at the heart of our Church and enables us to encompass the comprehensiveness of God's love, care and reach.

H. Anglican Comprehensiveness (Chris Johnson, Noosa)

Anglicanism values the traditions of Catholic, Evangelical and Liberal within the framework of the Bible, the Creeds and our Anglican formularies natted out in the 16th Century Reformation when the current distinctiveness of our Anglican church came into being.

Anglicans value the Bible as the primary source of our knowledge of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At the heart of the Bible is Jesus Christ. Anglicans are people who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, acknowledging him as Saviour and following him as Lord. Especially important is Jesus' death and resurrection. This is the great saving event of the Bible and is at the heart of Anglican Eucharistic liturgy.

Anglicans value the Catholic order of the church – Bishops, Priests and Deacons. This alongside synodical government provides a good balance of lay and clergy participation; local and wider church interests; and ability to engage in the mission Christ calls us to in the world. Being 'catholic' also means embracing Christians of other denominations as brothers and sisters in Christ and working with them in the mission of Christ.

Anglicans value the Liberal tradition of using reason to interpret the Bible and come to a well thought out faith. When reason sits under the Scripture it humbly seeks to obey Christ in all things. Reason makes the Apostolic witness to Christ make sense to each new generation. Anglicans love God with all their mind and all

their heart seeking a reasoned faith that stirs the soul and can be commended in the world.

Evangelical Anglicans place a special emphasis on the Bible as our final authority, as affirmed by our Fundamental Declarations in the Constitution of the Australian Church and the 39 Articles in the BCP, our foundation document of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Being evangelical means knowing the Jesus of scripture. His Incarnation provides the perfect life of obedience we are unable to live. At the cross he pays the price of sin, dying in our place so that we can be forgiven and set free. In his resurrection we are raised up to a new life in Christ. Jesus does for us what we can't do for ourselves. He is our substitute. This is truly Good News! To be evangelical is to live a life of total dedication to God the Father out of gratitude for all that Christ has done. This means living out the five marks of mission. By the power of the Holy Spirit we experience a new birth and are sent into the world in evangelism and mission.