

# God so Loved the World

Unity, Faith & Order  
Papers on  
Theological Anthropology  
and  
Salvation

Unity, Faith & Order Papers  
Nos 3 & 4

# God so Loved the World

## Created in the Image of God: The Divine Gift and Call to Humanity

An Anglican Theological Anthropology

Unity, Faith & Order Paper No. 3

## God's Sovereignty and Our Salvation

An Anglican Theological Statement

Unity, Faith & Order Paper No. 4

Prepared by  
The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on  
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## Preface to Both Papers

The first task given to the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith & Order (IASCUFO) is to promote the deepening of communion between the Churches of the Anglican Communion, and between those Churches and the other Churches and traditions of the Christian *oikumene*.

The fruits of IASCUFO's work are reflected in its studies and reports, which can be found on the Anglican Communion website and in the published reports of the Anglican Consultative Council of 2012, 2016 and 2019. The major studies are also published in a series of Unity, Faith & Order Papers.

The first, *Towards a Symphony of Instruments*, was prepared for the Anglican Consultative Council meeting (ACC-15) in 2012. It introduces the purpose, development, and theology of the four Instruments of Communion, in order that Anglicans and others may come to a fresh understanding of how they serve our common life, and how they deepen our communion with the Triune God and with one another for mission and service in the world.

The second Unity, Faith & Order Paper, *Communion in Ministry and Mission*, published in 2018, contains the three IASCUFO texts which the 2016 meeting of

the Anglican Consultative Council at Lusaka, Zambia, commended to the Churches of the Anglican Communion. The three texts deal with a variety of questions of communion in ministry and mission that complement and develop themes in *Towards a Symphony of Instruments*.

The third Unity, Faith & Order Paper, *Created in the Image of God*, is the fruit of a long consultation within IASCUFO on theological anthropology which concluded at its meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 2019. The paper reflects on the nature of humanity as created by God in the divine image and likeness and called by Christ to share eternal life.

The fourth paper, *God's Sovereignty and Our Salvation*, presents a brief exploration of Anglican views on salvation, understood as God's gift to his creation.

Created in the Image of God:  
The Divine Gift and Call to Humanity

An Anglican Theological Anthropology  
Unity, Faith & Order Paper No. 3

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

*Gen 1.27*

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

*Ps 139.13–14*

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

*Gal 3.28*

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient

to the point of death—even death on a cross.

*Phil 2.5–8*

His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants in the divine nature.

*2 Pet 1.3–4*

The glory of God is the living human being, and the life of the human creature is the vision of God.

(Gloria enim Dei vivens homo, vita autem hominis visio Dei)

Irenaeus of Lyon, *Against Heresies*, IV.34.7

## Introduction

1. Scripture teaches that every human person is made in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1.26–28). Each person, in being unique and irreplaceable, is of infinite value; every person, as made in God's image, has an intrinsic dignity. Moreover, St Paul teaches that we are one in Christ (Gal 3.28), for Christ came for all people (Rom 5.18–19; 1 Cor 15.22; 2 Cor 5.14). This is the great Christian insight for the world: God, the one in whom 'we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17.28), was incarnate in Jesus Christ for the whole world, taking the form of a slave (Phil 2.5–8). God in Christ redeemed and sanctified the whole of humanity that we might share in the divine life.<sup>1</sup>
2. This is the deep mystery of human being: we are created by God so that, in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit, we might share in the divine nature (2 Pet 1.4). Every human person, without exception and regardless of status or condition, is called by God to a participation in the fullness of God's life and love. How we respond to that call, and how we encourage others to respond, is a fundamental human question. Yet in the mystery and complexity of

the human condition, God desires to lift us to share the glory of God's life. The psalmist writes:

When I look at your heavens, the work  
of your fingers, the moon and the stars  
that you have established; what are  
human beings that you are mindful of  
them, mortals that you care for them?  
Yet you have made them a little lower  
than God, and crowned them with glory  
and honour.

*Ps 8.3–5*

3. God's call to humanity in his incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, is therefore universal. From its beginnings in Christ's gathering of disciples and the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Church has witnessed to the universality of this divine call in its catholic mission. The Christian Gospel, which is Good News for the whole world, was quickly carried across regional, intellectual, racial and cultural boundaries. Such diversity is reflected today in the range of human experience in the global Anglican Communion. This rich experience is a deep blessing in discerning the fullness of God's delight in all his people and the infinitely diverse ways in which we can

participate in God's life. At the same time, differences of culture, history and experience can become a catalyst for mutual misunderstanding and confusion. Amid such diversity, this study guide seeks to remind us of our common created nature in God's image, the intrinsic dignity of every person and the call to humanity to fullness of life in Jesus Christ.

4. The call of God to humanity within our contemporary global context pushes our reflection beyond intra-Anglican concerns about what it means to be a communion of churches to deeper questions about what it means to be a human being. At a most fundamental level, the present context necessitates an exploration of a theological anthropology as a route to the engagement of our relationships across global divides of wealth and culture. Our understanding of humanity must be informed by our engagement with the inheritance of faith, but also with the experience of those whom society marginalizes. Jesus was not an observer of his suffering sisters and brothers but was with them to serve and to transform, so that all could have life in its fullness (Mk 10.45; Lk 4.18; Jn 10.10).

5. The study guide seeks to establish a theological framework for a reflection on the nature of the human person. Within the overarching scriptural teaching that humanity is created in the image and likeness of God, the dual themes of 'call' and 'gift' are central. First, there is the call to existence in the gift of creation. Every creature and every person is first and foremost a gift of God. Second, there is the call to humanity in Jesus Christ to a participation in the divine nature. This is the second gift of grace in which the divine image is manifest in the human creature, and our humanity made whole and complete. God calls human beings to share, indeed participate in the life divine.
6. At the same time, the divine image in the human person is marred by sin. This is both corporate and personal, characterized by a fractured human nature in which we all share. The damage to human nature caused by sin gives rise to the most pressing political and ethical challenges of our time, for example the challenge of environmental despoilment and economic injustice. This study guide will consider these issues from the perspective of theological anthropology, not as the only instances of human injustice, but as examples of how we might

reflect together on God's call to the healing and reconciliation of our common humanity.

## Creation and the Human Person

7. The Christian understanding of the nature of the human person begins with creation. Scripture and Christian tradition teach that God creates all things out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) in an act of infinite liberality (Rom 11.36; 1 Cor 8.6; Rev 4.11).<sup>2</sup> God gifts to creation its very existence. Creation adds nothing to God, for God is eternally fulfilled; it is thus an act of gratuitous divine love. The letter of James teaches that:

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

*Jas 1.17–18*

8. God's act of creation in the donation of created being is an expression of the eternal divine love of the Persons of the Trinity. God declares that creation is very good (Gen 1.31), and its primordial condition is one of peace (Gen 2.23–25).
9. Within the created order, the scriptural teaching that humanity is created in the image of God (*imago Dei*) is central to the Christian understanding of the human person. While the whole of creation resembles the glory of the creator (Ps 19.1), humanity is unique among creatures because women and men are made in God's image and likeness.

Then God said, 'Let us make humanity in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and

multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

*Gen 1.26–28*

10. The reference to 'male and female' in Genesis signals the all-encompassing scope of the divine image: every human person, regardless of status or condition, bears the divine image. The New Testament expounds this mystery, for the Father's perfect and eternal image is found in the Son through whom and for whom all things have been created (Col 1.15–16). Jesus Christ, as the incarnation of that eternal image, is fully divine and fully human. Christ is therefore the completion and measure of humanity, for in Christ the call to humanity to share God's life is both given and fulfilled.

## The Human Person as Image of God

11. In reflecting on the nature of the human person as made in the image of God, we might locate that image in a particular quality or capacity which distinguishes humanity from all other creatures. Because scripture teaches that only human beings are created in God's image and likeness, and no other animals, we might look for the divine image in a capacity which is uniquely human. One distinctively human faculty which is sometimes associated with the divine image is rationality. The ability to reason, at its best, enables us to discern the beauty, truth and goodness at the heart of creation. We can reason through philosophical, artistic or scientific endeavours. Our intellectual capacity, evident in myriad forms across the human community, opens up new horizons, new possibilities and new questions. It enables us to begin to grasp creation as a whole and so participate in the divine reason of the one who created it.

12. In ancient and medieval Christian thought, and in many contemporary cultures around the globe, reason has a broad and rich scope which encompasses a very wide range of human creative endeavour. For example, we think of the scriptural image of the knowledge of a shepherd of the sheep (Jn 10.14). We might also think of other intimate forms of rational knowledge. For example, a musician's knowledge of her instrument, a craftsman of his trade, a parent of a child and a lover of the beloved have been understood as modes of reason; they arise from deep intimacy, commitment, desire and love. In the Christian tradition, such knowledge is frequently understood to be the result of human intellectual capacity which is the image of God's loving and intimate knowledge of his creation. This human capacity for intimate or intuitive knowledge is just as much an aspect of reason and intellect as the rational knowledge we so readily associate with abstract or scientific enquiry. As rationality was understood in ever narrower terms in the rise of modern Western 'rationalism', so the association of the image of God with reason and intellect became too exclusive and less appealing. It seems to associate the image of God with mere cleverness

or technical prowess. The identification of the image of God with a narrow understanding of reason and intellect could exclude large swathes of the human community.

13. There are other ways of understanding the image of God in the human person. An important insight is found in the first chapter of Genesis, namely God's command to 'be fruitful and multiply', to 'fill the earth and subdue it' and have dominion over other creatures. In the context of the current environmental crisis, this is a challenging teaching which will be explored further below. Some commentators see the roots of environmental exploitation in the human-centred teaching of religious traditions and, in particular, the Genesis command that human beings have dominion over creation.

14. Does this sanction our treatment of nature as if it were simply a warehouse of resources for our use and exploitation? Quite the reverse. In the ancient world, an important aspect of being an icon of the divine was to be the divine representative on earth. In the context of Genesis, this means sharing in God's nurturing of creation. In being given dominion over the earth, human beings are to participate in God's providential care of creation, ensuring its fruitfulness and protecting its beauty. As an image of God, humanity is to till the earth (Gen 2.15) and order and name creation (Gen 2.19–20). This implies that humanity, as an icon of the creator within creation, bears a moral responsibility towards the care and cultivation of God's good earth. Creation is a gift to be known, enjoyed and nurtured, not a resource to be exploited and abused. The exercise of human intellectual capacity, construed in broad and rich terms as an image of the divine reason at the heart of creation, is an important aspect of this vocation.

15. As well as identifying the image of God by distinguishing humanity from other creatures, theologians of the early Church also identified God's image by distinguishing human beings from other kinds of image such as statues. The ancient world was full of 'divine images' in the form of statues of the gods. Images of rulers were also a prominent way of signalling their pervasive presence, for example on coins. The Old Testament, however, features a number of commands not to make and worship such images because they can become idols. This is particularly familiar in the second of the Ten Commandments:

You shall not make for yourself an idol,  
whether in the form of anything that is  
in heaven above, or that is on the earth  
beneath, or that is in the water under the  
earth.

*Deut 5.8*

16. Yet God makes an image of himself in the form of the human person. One way in which we can distinguish a statue or idol as a 'divine image' from the image of God in the human person is through life; the human is a living image of God,

not a lifeless stone statue. The creation of the human person in the second creation account in Genesis suggests that humanity receives the breath of life directly from God:

then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.

*Gen 2.7*

17. God takes the dust of the earth and breathes into it the breath of life, directly and intimately. It is not the case that the human person possesses the divine image as a kind of 'add-on' or 'feature'; rather, as God breathes life into the dust of the earth, the human person in her totality is formed as the image of God by nature. Unlike the stone idols that lined the avenues of ancient cities across the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean, the human person is a living and embodied image of God, able to respond to the divine call and give voice to creation's prayer and praise. In our living worship of God, expressed in soul and body, we participate in God's life and reflect God's glory. So the image of God is not static; in the tenderness of a carer's touch, the embrace of

lovers and the outstretched arms of divine praise, we see the image of God's love flowing in the living human person.

18. The identification of an essential or common characteristic shared by every human person in which we can locate the divine image has nevertheless proved elusive. The fourth-century bishop and theologian St Gregory of Nyssa teaches that we must look not only to individuals, but to the whole of humanity in order to discern the mystery of the divine image.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the International Commission for Anglican–Orthodox Theological Dialogue statement on the human person makes clear that:

Every person, made in God's image, is inexhaustible in meaning: no delineation of our human characteristics can fully describe the depths of our personhood. We are each of us a mystery to ourselves and to one another. We approach this mystery of personhood with a sense of awe and wonder. 'Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed' (1 Jn 3.2).<sup>4</sup>

19. This means that each and every person is a unique and deep mystery of inestimable value and dignity. Whenever we face another, we see a reflection of God's infinite love and glory. The divine shimmers in every human face. As former Archbishop Rowan Williams writes:

This means that whenever I face another human being, I face a mystery. There is a level of their life, their existence, where I cannot go and which I cannot control, because it exists in relation to God alone—a secret word he speaks to each one, whether they hear or refuse to hear ... The reverence I owe to every person is connected with the reverence I owe to God, who brings them into being and keeps them in being.<sup>5</sup>

20. Every human person, in being unique, irreplaceable and mysteriously created in the image of God, is worth extravagant care and attention. The Christian understanding of the value of the human person does not prioritize productivity, success, mental capacity, youth, health or conformity to cultural norms. Followers of Christ see in each person the love of

God who bestows the *imago Dei* on everyone and graciously draws that image into focus to reflect more perfectly God's glory:

all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

*2 Cor 3.18*

## The Human Person as Gift

21. Rather than locate the divine image solely in an essential human quality or characteristic, we may look first to God and the divine call to the whole of humanity. That call is first heard in God's creative Word (Gen 1.3 and Jn 1.3–4) in which creation is called into being. The first truth of every creature is that it receives its existence as a gift, for no creature is the ground of its own existence. Every creature, including every human person, is first and foremost a gift to itself. As the Reformed theologian John Calvin writes at the beginning of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559):

No one can look upon himself without immediately turning his thoughts to the contemplation of God in whom he 'lives and moves'. For quite clearly, the mighty gifts with which we are endowed are hardly from ourselves; indeed, our very being is nothing but subsistence in the one God.<sup>6</sup>

22. What is the importance of understanding the human person as a gift? The scriptures reflect deeply on the significance of gift. Paul writes,

'For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?' (1 Cor 4.7). The Holy Spirit, frequently known in the Christian tradition as 'the gift',<sup>7</sup> is the source of the gifts which form the Church as the body of Christ (1 Cor 12). Human relations are expressed through gifts, whether they be of time, talents, skill, attention, care or money. These are gifts of love which form and express a relationship and therefore bear meaning and significance, not simply utility. In the giving of a gift, the gift bears something of the giver to the recipient. The reciprocal sharing of gifts forms family bonds and community.

23. In common with all creation, humanity receives itself as a gift from God. The gift of our humanity bears something of the giver, God, to the recipient, the human person. Although humanity receives everything from God, it is called in turn to give itself to God in thankfulness. Humanity is called into loving exchange, or communion, with God and gives voice to creation's gift of praise and thanksgiving. The reciprocal exchange of gifts with God is reflected in King David's hymn of praise at the offering for the building of the first Temple in Jerusalem. This prayer is often used at the offertory in the Eucharistic liturgy.

Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Riches and honour come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name. But who am I, and what

is my people, that we should be able to make this freewill-offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.

*1 Chron 29.11–14*

24. Humanity is therefore not simply the recipient of the gifts of God but is called to offer itself as a gift to God—a ‘living sacrifice’ offered in thanks and praise (Rom 12.1). Humanity is called to a reciprocal relation of communion with God in the form of gift-exchange.<sup>8</sup>
25. While humanity receives God’s first gift in the call to being and life, it receives a second gift of grace in the call to eternal life through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. This is the life we receive in our second birth at baptism. So the image of God in the human person may not simply be found in a common human capacity or feature, but in the gracious call and gift of God to communion in sharing the fullness of his life and reflecting his eternal glory in, through and beyond the world. The gift and call to participate in the divine nature is made to every human person, regardless of status or condition. This suggests that the image of God in humanity belongs not only to our beginning as creatures

bearing the divine image, but also to our end at the *eschaton*, for 'when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is' (1 Jn 3.2). The drama of salvation is therefore the healing and fulfilment of the divine image first given in humanity's creation, in which we participate in Christ's transfiguration to shine with the fullness of God's glory.

And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

*2 Cor 3.18*

## Christ the Eternal Image

26. The New Testament deepens our understanding of the human person as an image of God with reference to Christ. In Paul's letter to the Colossians, we read that:

[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

*Col 1:15–20*

27. Paul teaches that Christ is the eternal image of the Father for 'in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell' (Col 1.19). Christ is of the same substance as the Father and is therefore the identical image; he teaches that 'The Father and I are one' (Jn 10.30). As the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, the Word made flesh, Christ is also fully human. In the person of Christ, therefore, we find the perfect image of God in human form. Christ is the eternal image who is also 'Emmanuel', God with us (Mt 1.23).
28. Does this displace the human person as the image of God? No, because the human person is an image of God in and through Christ. Paul teaches that all things in heaven and earth were created through Christ and for Christ and 'in him all things hold together' (Col 1.17). The eternal Word and wisdom of God is therefore inscribed in every creature. In the human person, the divine image and likeness is uniquely inscribed, and this is confirmed and fulfilled in God's taking human flesh in Jesus Christ. In turn, the New Testament speaks abundantly of the human person's incorporation into Christ. These are deeply intimate images in which Christ's lifeblood becomes our own lifeblood. In being grafted into Christ, who is the eternal and perfect

image of God sharing the same nature as the Father, our humanity is brought to its fullness as the created image of God. Jesus' words make clear the intimacy of his relationship with humanity.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

*Jn 15.1-5*

29. We therefore have a vivid picture of humanity as the divine image which begins in creation and looks forward to the perfection of the divine image at the end of time. The human person is created as a bearer of the image of the divine and,

as such, that divine image is ours by nature. It belongs to everyone. Christ is the one in whom, through whom, and for whom all things are created, so Christ is the beginning or Alpha of our humanity. At the same time, the human person is created to have a particular share in God's eternal life. Imaging God by sharing in God's eternal life is not realized by exercising any natural human capacity or function. We cannot perfect ourselves as divine icons by our own powers. Instead, our natural capacities and vocation are perfected by the grace of God which comes through Christ, into whose body we are incorporated by baptism and the Eucharist. The divine image is brought into focus as we are incorporated into Christ, the eternal and perfect image of God the Father. As well as our beginning or alpha, Christ is also our goal or Omega, for he is the eternal Word made flesh who draws us into the life of God through his death and resurrection (Rev 1.8, 21.6, 22.13). The human person is perfected as the image of God precisely by being incorporated into the life of the eternal and perfect image who is Christ our Lord.

30. This means that Christ *frames* the life of every human person, for he is our beginning and end.

We are created by nature to bear the image of God in and through the eternal and perfect image of the Word who became incarnate of Christ. While every human person shares a natural beginning as a creature in God's image, we also share a desire for a supernatural end—a sharing God's eternal life. We become ever more vivid images of God through incorporation into the life of Christ by the gracious gift the Holy Spirit. We find ourselves in myriad places and conditions between our common beginning and the end or goal to which God calls us, yet Christ walks with every person to show the glory to which humanity is called. This locates the image of God not principally in a human capacity or function; it locates the image of God in the human person first and foremost in Christ the eternal image made flesh. The human person as an image of God shares in Christ the eternal image in creation and redemption.

## The Human Person and the Image of Love

31. As the human person is incorporated into Christ, the image of God is perfected by grace. The life into which Christ draws us is at once his own and also the whole life of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Christian faith professes that God is love. Love is relational. God is the eternal relation of love whose name is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the one in whom 'we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17.28). This eternal love is revealed in history, in the incarnation of the Son of God who shows us the Father and gives the Holy Spirit (Jn 14.8–14, 20.22).
32. The revelation of God who is love, in whose image we are created, is the subject of John's meditation in his first letter in the New Testament.

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is

love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

*1 Jn 4.7–12*

33. Love is not simply a commandment, for it is first a gift. It begins with God's gift of love in creation, which is revealed most fully in the gift of God's very self in the incarnation of the Son of God. John writes of God sending his Son 'so that we might live through him' (1 Jn 4.9). This is how God loves: by self-giving, even to death. How are we drawn into that love? Through the gift not only of the Son, but also of the Holy Spirit.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we

have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

*1 Jn 4.13–16*

34. John's letter therefore teaches us that we abide in God through the gifts of the Holy Spirit who enables us to see and testify that the Father sent the Son as the Saviour of the world. When we abide in the eternal love revealed in Christ by the Spirit, we abide in God, and God in us.
35. There is, however, a crucial element in John's teaching which is of immediate concern. The lavish love which God bestows upon creation, and supremely on human beings as creatures bearing God's image and likeness, cascades across human lives:

Since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

*1 Jn 4.11*

36. Human love in all its richness and glory, particularly our love for one another, lies at the heart of our understanding of the divine image in the human person. Every act of human self-

donation—of time, attention, nurture and care, the tender touch of lovers and lifelong commitments of many kinds—is luminous with the divine image. If we love one another, God lives in us and his image is perfected in us. At its most mature, human love is a response to our experience of being loved first by God. We know ourselves at the deepest level of our being as creatures and objects of eternal love. That love overflows abundantly to those around us. Viewed in this way, the image of God in the human person is active, dynamic and living.

37. This love, however, is not merely sentimental. Sentiments can flower and fade very quickly. God's love is different. According to scripture, one of the most important characteristics of God's love is faithfulness, even in the face of human faithlessness and rebellion (Deut 7.9; Ps 91.4, 103.15–17; Hos 11.8–9; 1 Cor 1.9; 1 Thess 5.24; 2 Thess 3.3; 1 Jn 1.9). This love is enduring and does not turn its face. Paul sums up the character of God's loving faithfulness so beautifully in his first letter to the Christians in Corinth:

[Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

*1 Cor 13.7–8*

38. To bear God's image most fully and deeply requires God's grace; it also asks the very best of us. In our fidelity to God in Christ, in our fidelity to one another and to ourselves, we see the image of God who is love, whose faithfulness is everlasting.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

*1 Thess 5.23–24*

## The Human Person in Relationship

39. The uniquely Christian proclamation that God is revealed as Trinity lends a particular understanding to the image of God in humanity. God reveals himself in Christ as a relationship of Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each Person of the Trinity is its relation with the other Persons; God is pure relationality. In the Christian patristic tradition, the Persons of the Trinity are distinguished only by means of their eternal procession as articulated in the Nicene Creed: the Father is unbegotten, the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, the Spirit proceeds. When we talk of the Persons of the Trinity, we do not talk of three 'people', three centres of consciousness or three 'parts' of the Trinity. Each Person of the Trinity is the fullness of God who is the eternal exchange of love (1 Jn 4.16). This is not to say that we know God in God's self, but it is to say that we should speak of God as a relationship of love which is revealed by Christ and reflected, however faintly, within creation. So human beings, who are created in the image of God, are also to be known through their relations in the communion of life.

40. There is, however, only one relation that is wholly definitive of every creature: its relation to God who creates all things. Outside this relation to God the creator, every creature, including the human person, is nothing. While every human person is the offspring of a parental relationship and enters a variety of living relations as, for example, sibling, spouse, parent, friend, colleague, leader or helper, no single relationship between human persons wholly defines those persons. A woman may be a mother, sister, friend or carer, but none of these relations, however precious and valuable, fully captures the depth of her humanity. Our creaturely relationships are fluid, and no creaturely relationship comprehends the mystery of our humanity and all its possible manifestations. Yet through those relations we learn about, and participate in, our fundamental relation to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the one in whom 'we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17.28).
41. Genesis teaches that humanity is made in the image of God in a relationship of male and female (Gen 1.27, 2.21–23). In the deep longing for relation, the human creature was presented with the animals of God's creation and so named them (Gen 2.19–20). Yet no animal answered its

name. It is only in the flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone that man finds the fullness of humanity. Importantly, woman and man commune in language; they answer to one another. Human speech, which is crucial for human relations, in turn answers the divine creative address—‘Let there be light’—in prayer and praise. Speech is pre-eminently relational and, in the speech of male and female, creation is able to address God and speak its praise of the creator.

42. While scripture and the Christian tradition teach that humanity is created male and female and that life is given through this fundamental difference in procreation, the depth and complexity of gender and sex in both cultural expression and biological structure must be recognized. The creation of humanity as male and female encompasses the full breadth of human experience and looks forward to the consummation of our common humanity at the final resurrection.

Thus it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living being’; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the

physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

*1 Cor 15.45–49*

43. The gift of marriage in creation is an important aspect of the Christian understanding of the human person. The wholeness of creation and the wholeness of the kingdom of heaven into which all things are gathered are figured in the union of marriage. This can be seen most clearly in scripture through the union of Christ the bridegroom with his bride the Church (Eph 5.25–33) and the union of Christ and the Church as a single body (1 Cor 12.12–14; Eph 1.22–23). The Eucharist—the gift of the body and blood of Christ—sacramentally realizes the union of Christ and the Church (1 Cor 10.16–17). In this sense, the Eucharist is interpreted as a wedding feast: the celebration of a union between Christ and the Church. It is a foretaste of the wedding

feast at the *eschaton* (Rev 19.6–9). The spousal gift of the self at marriage—a handing over of body and soul—is a type of the sacrificial gift of Christ for his bride the Church (Eph 5.25).

44. While marriage remains central to Christian anthropology, so too does vocation to the single life, whether religious or secular. Such a vocation leaves the human person open to a wide range of relationships and callings which are fruitful in myriad ways, bearing witness to the love and fidelity of God in self-donation to the good of others and the life of the Church.

## The Freedom of the Human Person

45. God is eternally free. God creates in sovereign freedom, unconstrained by anything pre-existent and unmoved by any lack. God's freedom is not a mere freedom of will, as if God simply selects from an infinite series of choices. God's freedom consists in the perfect, eternal expression of God's nature. In that sovereign freedom, God elects humanity as an expression of his eternal goodness (Eph 1.3–6). The freedom of the human person is therefore an aspect of the divine image in humanity. Every obstacle to human freedom in the form of sin, oppression, coercion and violence is an affront to the dignity and divine calling of the human person.
46. In contemporary discourse, freedom is often understood as a political category which refers to self-determination. It is sometimes construed negatively as freedom *from* constraint or restriction. Libertarianism understands freedom to consist in unconstrained or undetermined choices. In the Christian tradition, however, freedom is not simply freedom of choice. Liberty is not extended or deepened simply by presenting human persons and communities with ever more unconstrained choices. Indeed,

the divine freedom does not consist in God deliberating between choices, for God eternally wills only the good. The good is not an option among others which we might or might not choose. So true human freedom consists not simply in the exercise of the will in making choices, but in the ability to will the good. It consists in the harmony of the human will with the divine will. By the gracious gifts of the Holy Spirit, humanity is schooled in the virtues, most particularly the virtues of faith, hope and charity, which together orient the will to God and open us to receive the gift of eternal life. The fullness of human freedom is found in God 'in whose service is perfect freedom'.<sup>9</sup>

47. Moreover, in the Christian tradition freedom is not a mere human endeavour or a political hope; it has deeper and wider consequences. To be free is to be a child of God in and for creation. In Paul's letter to the Romans, he makes clear that human freedom, the freedom of the children of God, lies at the heart of creation's freedom.

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the

will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

*Rom 8.19–23*

48. Creation awaits the revealing of the children of God, for creation will share in ‘the freedom of the glory of the children of God’ (Rom 8.21). Paul goes on to make clear that this freedom begins in hope and prayer as we cry to God in our weakness. We are drawn into the very life of the Spirit.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the

Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

*Rom 8.26–27*

49. Prayer therefore becomes integral to our freedom, the freedom in the Spirit to cry ‘Abba! Father!’ (Gal 4.6). This freedom is a central aspect of our share in the divine image. To pray is to be human, and to be human is to give voice to creation’s longing for freedom and glory through prayer. This is the human vocation at the heart of creation as we are drawn into the Spirit who ‘intercedes with sighs too deep for words’ (Rom 8.26).

## The Fracture of the Image of God: Human Sin

50. Scripture, as well as human history and experience, reminds us that the image of God in the human person is tragically marred and distorted. This is the state of human sin from which every human person needs redemption. Yet God's graciousness in Christ does more than simply 'put back' God's image in the human person; as we have seen, it perfects that image so that we share God's eternal glory.
51. What is 'sin'? The Hebrew and Greek words for sin have their origins in archery and spear-throwing. They refer to missing the mark, being wide of the goal, not getting things quite right or veering from the target. So a sin is literally a miss—a failure of the will to hit the target, a failure to fulfil our best intentions, and failure to reach the good goals that God wills for us. Of course sin refers to those things we associate with acute moral failure, but it also refers to all those small but bad daily habits that damage our relationships with God and each other—the habits of too quickly thinking badly of others, of taking pleasure in others' failure, of blaming others, of thinking of oneself and one's

reputation above all things; habits of greed, jealousy, envy, resentment and ingratitude. We are wounded by a thousand cuts—the little everyday things that wither our souls, sour our relationships, dull our senses to God’s love and make us less than human.

52. Sin, therefore, is not simply the list of bad things we do each day or week. Rather, it is a condition or a state, more like an illness that affects body and soul. Sin is something that affects the way we are before it affects the way we act. It diminishes our humanity. Sin is a state we all share; it is an entanglement in which we are lost and estranged from God. We are also lost in the world’s tendency towards selfishness and greed. We are lost in our inability really to believe that the world, with all its poverty, violence and injustice, can be truly transformed. Sin is our tendency to be idolatrous like the Israelites in the wilderness (Ex 32): to invent gods in whom we put our ultimate faith and trust, to worship ourselves and our own abilities. To put it in Paul’s terms, sin is that daily tendency to be conformed to this world rather than being renewed and transformed according to the mind of Christ (Rom 12.2).

53. A wider, social, relational and structural understanding of sin can also help us to understand the human condition as that of created and fallen persons who become drawn into the orbit of destructive forces over which they only have limited control, and of which they are not always even aware. Sin, in this context, is not reduced to an individual choice or action freely chosen, but extended to participation in wider oppressive systems, and the brokenness visited on individuals and communities by the life experiences and systems to which they are subjected. Churches have all too often participated in oppressive power relationships, using scripture and tradition to justify their practices. Church history reminds us that being a Christian is no guarantee that our perspectives and actions will always be informed by the love and mind of Christ. Rather, it cautions us to show a proper humility in our actions and pronouncements, recognizing that even when we seek to do right, we may nevertheless be deeply influenced by the world around us, and by our own desire for power and acceptance. For some, patriarchy would be a primary example of such an oppressive system. Transformation is needed, but it is not limited to the kind of

personal transformation we talk about in terms of individual ethical choices. It requires a deeper healing of our human nature and the restoration of the divine image in every person.

54. In being a state of fallen nature, sin also affects humanity across times and generations. We inherit and live with the injustices and inhumanity of Christians of former ages and must acknowledge such failures because we are part of the single body of Christ. As Christians, we confess our sin both individually and corporately, for ourselves, our generation and past generations. Former Archbishop Rowan Williams gave a cogent expression of this position when speaking in 2006 during the year marking the bicentenary of the abolition of the Transatlantic slave trade. While offering an apology for the participation of the Church in this crime against humanity, he said:

The body of Christ is not just a body that exists at any one time; it exists across history and we therefore share the shame and the sinfulness of our predecessors and part of what we can do, with them and for them in the body of Christ, is prayerful

acknowledgement of the failure that is part of us not just of some distant 'them'.<sup>10</sup>

55. The sin which continues in modern slavery, human trafficking, domestic violence and sexual abuse requires constant repentance as we seek God's grace to restore the image of the divine glory in the human community. The theology of sin does not look simply to personal moral culpability. It points to the broken state of humanity in which we are called to repent of the damaged world we have all created, in which we are all imperceptibly implicated, in which the most heinous abuse of human persons is made possible.
56. Looking to the origins of sin as the fracturing and diminishment of our humanity, the book of Genesis tells of sin entering creation as Adam and Eve eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The first effect of sin is made clear.

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the

garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.'

*Gen 3.8–10*

57. The man and his wife hid themselves. Sin closes us in on ourselves, making us ashamed of our humanity and the dark corners of our hearts. Sin stops us being open to others and to God. This brings a certain fear—a fear of shame, a fear of the truth, a fear of God, a fear of ourselves. We all have dark corners of our hearts that we would never want others to see and which we often pretend are not there.
58. Following the account of sin in Genesis, the Old Testament tells of God's longing to find a way into the closed heart of humanity, especially through the prophets. In the end, humanity is so closed to God that God must find a way in by taking human nature to himself—by entering the heart of humanity in the incarnation. The route into creation and the human heart is Mary, the *Theotokos* or 'God-bearer'. She is blessed and favoured because sin has not closed her in on herself. In her simplicity and humility, Mary is

open to God. The Angel Gabriel greets Mary and tells her that she will bear a child who will be called 'the Son of the Most High' (Lk 1.26-37). Her response, 'let it be with me according to your word', is an expression of the deepest human faith in God's loving purposes. Without fear and without being closed in on herself, Mary can receive God's Word.

59. Later in Luke's Gospel, we learn of Mary's response in the song we often call the Magnificat:

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

*Lk 1.46-49*

60. How could Mary, a human person, 'magnify' God? What this means is that Mary does not draw attention to herself, but to God. She magnifies God in the sense that she points us to God's saving love. In doing so, God also magnifies her: the Lord does great things for this lowly servant. As Mary is open to God and

magnifies God, so her humanity is magnified—made fuller, more radiant and more beautiful. This is not a zero-sum game in which either God is glorified or humanity is glorified. In our glorification of God, in our openness to his love, our humanity is healed and restored; it is made fully what God intends it to be. As the second-century bishop and theologian Irenaeus of Lyon put it: ‘The glory of God is the living human being, and the life of the person is the vision of God.’

## The Human Person and Dominion: Environmental Justice

61. Genesis teaches that God commanded humanity to 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth' (Gen 1.28). This has led to the view that humanity is set apart from wider creation and possesses a particular vocation with respect to other creatures. It is sometimes claimed that the scriptural teaching that humanity has dominion over creatures gave rise to the view that nature is simply a resource for our use and abuse; it is something we dominate rather than nurture. This places the human person above the natural world and suggests that wider creation has no intrinsic meaning, purpose or value beyond its usefulness for human beings.
62. It is beyond reasonable doubt that humanity and the earth face an unprecedented crisis because of exploitation, pollution, global warming and climate change.<sup>11</sup> The rise in carbon dioxide, the principal greenhouse gas, has increased dramatically in recent decades; it is linked to increased use of fossil fuels following the

industrial revolution. Rising sea levels damage coastal ecosystems, forcing populations inland. In turn, this puts greater pressure on agricultural land. Deforestation, linked to increasing demand for land to graze animals for food production, has dramatic consequences for the global environment. Global warming results in climate change and the increased incidence of extreme weather events. There is little doubt that the world's poorest communities feel the effects of environmental exploitation and degradation most immediately and with disproportionately greater force.

63. Can the Christian tradition offer resources for re-imagining humanity's relationship with wider creation? This is a topic of great complexity and gravity. There are three initial insights to which one might briefly point for further reflection.
64. First, the Christian tradition reflects on humanity's place at the heart of creation. We are one with God's creatures. Adam is formed 'from the dust of the earth'. This connects the human person to the most basic element of God's creation; we are made of the dust of the earth. The ancient hymn to creation, the *Benedicite*, a canticle used at Morning Prayer in the Book of

Common Prayer (1549/1662), places human beings in the heart of God's creation, not over it. In common with all creatures, humanity praises the creator.

O ye Whales, and all that move in the  
Waters, bless ye the Lord:  
praise him, and magnify him for ever.  
O all ye Fowls of the Air, bless ye the  
Lord:  
praise him, and magnify him for ever.  
O all ye Beasts and Cattle, bless ye the  
Lord:  
praise him, and magnify him for ever.  
O ye Children of Men, bless ye the  
Lord:  
praise him, and magnify him for ever.  
O let Israel bless the Lord:  
praise him, and magnify him for ever.

65. The medieval Christian conviction that humanity is a microcosm of creation, sharing in every aspect of created nature in being both material and intellectual (thus having something in common with everything from rocks to angels), ensured that humanity was at the heart of a unified creation, not separate from it. The meaning, purpose and well-being of the human

community is intimately bound together with that of creation as a whole. This means that, however we understand humanity's dominion over creation, it does not mean domination. It refers to a participation in God's providential care of the good creation, all of which shares in the liturgy of divine praise. All abuse, exploitation and manipulation of the natural away from God's good ends in the flourishing of creation is therefore a diminishment of the divine image in humanity and a betrayal of our vocation to be icons of God in caring for creatures and the earth.

66. Second, the Christian tradition offers some critical insight into the assumptions of global capitalism, which some regard as a significant driver of behaviour leading to environmental exploitation. Modern capitalism is predicated on a crucial but contestable assumption, namely that humanity has unlimited 'wants' or 'desires' while the world offers us only scarce resources. The fundamental problem addressed by modern economics is scarcity; there is, apparently, not enough to meet everyone's desires and needs. Our appetites are insatiable. We therefore strive for ever greater production of material wealth

through a relentless but often unquestioned demand for economic growth.

67. By contrast, the Old Testament offers humanity an important concept: of there being 'enough' for both our need and enjoyment. This is particularly clear in the Levitical law's teachings concerning the harvest.

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and for the alien: I am the Lord your God.

*Lev 23.22 (see also Deut 24.19–21)*

68. The Israelites are commanded not to reap the entire harvest, as if it were barely enough for their need. There is sufficient to feed everyone; our attention to the needs of the poor must lie at the heart of food production. Moreover, the land does not need to be worked ceaselessly. A share in the sabbath rest belongs to all creation and indicates there is more than enough for all God's creatures.

For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

*Ex 23.10–11 (see also Lev 25.4–5)*

69. Avarice takes root in our anxiety that there is never enough for our needs or desires. This can be challenged through a renewed understanding of creation's abundance and the human vocation to nurture, share and enjoy that abundance. The Old Testament law testifies that there is enough for human need and enjoyment. It is important to decide what counts as 'enough', not only for bare need but also for the enjoyment and celebration of life, such that creation is not pillaged in response to apparently insatiable human greed.
70. Third, creation is a gift. Like any gift, it bears meaning and significance beyond mere use; something of the donor, God, is given to the recipients, God's creatures. Implicit in a gift given is the call for recognition in the form of

thanksgiving. It places a moral obligation upon us, the recipients, to treasure and nurture the gift. It also invites us to share the gift so that it is given again. Through the exchange of gifts and the sharing of God's good creation, social bonds are enhanced, and our humanity is lifted through the deepening of common life or communion.

71. After the gift of creation itself, God's second gift is food to sustain the life of every creature. We read about this in Genesis, in the account of the sixth day of creation. God first addresses the man and woman about their own needs, then tells them about provision for his creatures.

God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

72. We know the delight and significance of food. We often celebrate a marriage union, the loving unity of a family, bonds of friendship or fellowship among colleagues by sharing a meal. Anthropologists tell us about the universal significance of food in human society. This primal gift of food in creation reaches its fulfilment in the gift of Christ, the bread of life, who is food for our salvation. In the Eucharist, we share true food and true drink. This reveals the true meaning of food: living in communion with God, the source of every good gift, and sharing his life.

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and

they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.

*Jn 6.54–58*

73. Humanity's abuse of the earth is significantly driven by the demand for food to meet the needs of a growing global population. Nevertheless, the US Department of Agriculture estimates that 30–40 per cent of the US food supply is wasted.<sup>12</sup> In the UK, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) estimates that in 2015 annual food waste within the UK was around 10 million tonnes, 70 per cent of which was avoidable. This had a value of over £20 billion a year and could be associated with more than 25 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, in 2018, the World Food Programme reported that 824 million people, more than 1 in 9 across the globe, do not have enough to eat. The vast majority of the world's hungry live in sub-Saharan Africa, where a quarter of the population is under-nourished. The grotesque waste of food in a small number of highly developed countries places extreme yet avoidable stress on global agriculture to produce increasing amounts of food. Recovering the sense of food as the first common gift of God to

creation, laden with significance for human flourishing and the celebration of life, can be a first step in re-imagining humanity's relation to the earth and its fruits.

## The Human Person and Poverty: Economic Justice

74. The Christian Gospel is radical in countless ways. One of its most telling features, yet the basis of much that we like to take for granted in modern liberal politics, is a persistent call to care for the poor. At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus announces that he comes to bring good news to the poor (Lk 4.17–19). The poor will be blessed and the rich sent empty away.

Then he looked up at his disciples and said: 'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

*Lk 6.20–21*

75. Many cultures are so formed by the Christian Gospel that we fail to recognize the radical character of scripture. It is a collection of literature, unique in the ancient world, that shows the deepest concern for the lives of ordinary people with no resources: peasant fishermen, lepers and widows, the lame and blind of Galilee. The Jewish and Christian

emphasis on economic justice and the needs of the poor had a profound effect on the understanding of the human person and the historic development of civic society.<sup>14</sup> Whereas the ancient cities of Greece and Rome benefited from philanthropy in the form of public theatres, baths and government basilicas, the Christian cities which succeeded them, building on a fundamental Jewish inheritance, featured buildings dedicated to the care of the abject poor: convents, hospitals, orphanages and soup kitchens. This is a different kind of charity which is distinctive in at least two respects. First, such charity, unlike ancient pagan philanthropy, has a religious basis because giving to the poor is a sacred and sacramental act. This means that when we give to those who are in any kind of need, we are expressing something of the character of God. To say that charity is a sacramental act is to say that when we give to those in need our gift is a sign of God's gift of life and love to all people; it is a means of God's grace. To give to the poor in body or spirit is also to give to God from all that we have received as his children (Prov 19.17). This is based on countless teachings in scripture about God's care

for the poor, not least these haunting words of Jesus recorded in Matthew's Gospel:

'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

*Mt 25.37–40*

76. Second, charity as described in scripture and tradition is orientated towards the abject poor rather than the general populace—those who are, in the world's terms, of no worth. Yet no human person has nothing to offer in return. Indeed, the generosity of the poor is the object of Jesus' teaching and admiration (Mt 26.6–13; Lk 21.1–4). This expresses a fundamental Christian conviction to which the Church has faithfully borne witness and, at times, tragically betrayed throughout its history, namely the ultimate

dignity and innate worth of every human person, no matter what their circumstances or material condition. No human person is simply the recipient of others' charity, for everyone has something to offer. This is evident, for example, in Paul's description of the generosity of the Macedonian Christians towards the poor of Jerusalem.

We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints—and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us, so that we might urge Titus that, as he had already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking among you.

77. Early Christian teachings likewise stress the importance of human dignity and worth in the midst of poverty. In a homily on the care of the poor, the fourth-century bishop and theologian Gregory of Nyssa told his hearers:

Do not despise those who are stretched out on the ground as if they merit no respect. Consider who they are and you will discover their worth. They bear the countenance of our Saviour. The Lord in His goodness has given them His own countenance in order that it might cause the hard-hearted, those who hate the poor, to blush with shame just as those being robbed thrust before their attackers the images of their king to shame the enemy with the appearance of the ruler. The poor are the stewards of our hope, doorkeepers of the kingdom, who open the door to the righteous and close it again to the unloving and misanthropists.<sup>15</sup>

78. Despite the Jewish and Christian emphasis on care for the poor, extreme economic inequalities leading to acute human suffering mar the

worldwide human community. World Vision reports that in 2015, 736 million people were living in extreme poverty, surviving on less than \$1.90 a day. More than half of the world's extreme poor, 413 million people, live in sub-Saharan Africa. The 2015 figure represented an increase of 9 million people from two years earlier.<sup>16</sup> Such inequalities are reflected in the experience of the Anglican Communion, such is the Church's embroilment in the economic injustices of the world. A return to our tradition's concern for the poor, expressed so vividly in scripture and urgently in the teachings of Christ, will also be a renewal of the Church's understanding of the dignity and worth of every human person as created in the image and likeness of God.

If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted towards your needy neighbour. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.

*Deut 15.7–8*

## The Hope of Reconciled Humanity

79. The mystery of the human person is explored between two poles: our creation in the image and likeness of God, and God's call in Jesus Christ to share in the eternal life of God. We are not isolated and alone in the experience of human joy, pain and complexity, for God took our human nature in the incarnation of the Word in order to re-create us and reconcile us to himself.

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

*2 Cor 5.17–19*

80. In reconciling our fallen humanity to God, Christ also offers us a ministry of reconciliation, reconciling us to ourselves and to one another. This ministry of reconciliation is a participation in the reconciling ministry of Christ; if we are

reconciled to God, we ought to be reconciled to one another. That ministry can include the reconciliation of humanity to wider creation as we work to live justly and peaceably with the earth. This peaceable kingdom, in which humanity finds its fulfilment and leads the animals as an innocent child, is beautifully expressed in the prophecy of Isaiah:

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the

weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

*Isa 11.3b–9*

This is the Christian hope for humanity, the hope of the Church, and the hope of creation.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, trans. Archibald Robinson in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, second series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), paragraph 54, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> Augustine of Hippo, *De vere religione*, in *On Christian Belief*, trans. Edmund Hill, OP, et al. (New York: New City Press, 2005), paragraph 35, p. 51; Augustine, *Confessiones*, trans. F. J. Sheed, ed. Michael Foley, 2nd edn (Indianapolis, IN, and Cambridge, MA: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006), XII.7, XII.17, XIII.33, pp. 264, 272–3, 319; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, trans. Laurence Shapcote, OP, ed. John Mortensen and Enrique Alarcón (Lander, WY: The Aquinas Institute for the Study of Sacred Doctrine, 2012), 1a.45.1, pp. 459–60. For recent treatments by Anglican theologians, see John Webster, "'Love is also a Lover of Life": *Creatio ex nihilo* and Creaturely Goodness', *Modern Theology*, 29:2 (2013), 156–71, and Simon

Oliver, *Creation: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), ch. 2.

<sup>3</sup> 'Now just as any particular man is limited in his bodily dimensions, and the peculiar size which is conjoined with the superficialities of his body is the measure of his separate existence, so I think that the entire plenitude of humanity was included by the God of all, by his power of foreknowledge, as it were in one body, and that this is what the text teaches us which says, "God created man, in the image of God created He him." For the image is not part of our nature, nor is the grace in any one of the things found in that nature, but this power extends equally to all the race ... the man that was manifested at the first creation of the world, and he that shall be after the consummation of all, are alike: they equally bear in themselves the Divine image. For this reason, the whole race was spoken of as one man, namely, that to God's power nothing is either past or future, but even that which we expect is comprehended, equally with what is at present existing, by the all-sustaining energy.' Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*, XVI.17–18, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, second series, vol. 5, trans. William Moore and Henry Austin Wilson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994 edn), p. 406.

<sup>4</sup> International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue (ICAOTD), *In the Image and Likeness of God: A Hope-Filled Anthropology* (London: Anglican Communion Office, 2015), §5, in-the-image-and-likeness-of-

god-a-hope-filled-anthropology-2015.pdf (accessed December 2020).

<sup>5</sup> Rowan Williams, *Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life* (London: SPCK, 2016), p. 64.

<sup>6</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), I.1.1, <https://ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes/institutes.iii.ii.html> (accessed April 2021).

<sup>7</sup> Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1a.38.

<sup>8</sup> The notion of communion in reciprocal exchange has many wider cultural resonances across the Anglican Communion, for example in African *ubuntu* theology and philosophy and in the concept of *sangsaeng* in the Korean philosophy of jeungsanism. *sang* (相) means ‘mutual’ or ‘together’, and *saeng* (生) means ‘to live’ or ‘to survive’.

<sup>9</sup> Collect for Peace in the Order for Morning Prayer, Book of Common Prayer (1549/1662), [www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/book-common-prayer/order-morning-prayer](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/book-common-prayer/order-morning-prayer) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Archbishop Rowan Williams, General Synod speech, 2006, quoted in Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: In the Aftermath of Abuse* (London: Church House Publishing, 2017), p. 62, [www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/forgivenessandreconciliation\\_0.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/forgivenessandreconciliation_0.pdf) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>11</sup> The European Environment Agency provides independent information on the environment: [www.eea.europa.eu](http://www.eea.europa.eu). NASA provides climate change data: <https://climate.nasa.gov> (both accessed April 2021).

<sup>12</sup> US Department of Agriculture, [www.usda.gov/foodwaste/faqs](http://www.usda.gov/foodwaste/faqs) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>13</sup> Waste and Resources Action Programme, [www.wrap.org.uk/content/all-sectors](http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/all-sectors) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>14</sup> Gary A. Anderson, *Charity: The Place of the Poor in the Biblical Tradition* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2013), ch. 2.

<sup>15</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Love of the Poor*, 1: 'On Good Works', available in Susan R. Holman, *The Hungry are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 193–9.

<sup>16</sup> World Vision, [www.worldvision.org/sponsorship-news-stories/global-poverty-facts#fast-facts](http://www.worldvision.org/sponsorship-news-stories/global-poverty-facts#fast-facts) (accessed April 2021).

# God's Sovereignty and Our Salvation

An Anglican Theological Statement

Unity, Faith & Order Paper No. 4

Prepared by  
The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on  
Unity, Faith & Order

1. Christians believe that salvation is, first and foremost, a gift from God. Salvation is given according to God's sovereign freedom. In recent years, however, there has been a tendency in some areas of the Anglican Communion's life to question or name another's salvation, or lack thereof. What lifestyle or teaching is due cause for a person to lose or gain salvation? Other voices are quick to caution against any human identification of who is saved and who is not. This short paper will look at some examples of the scriptural teaching about salvation in order to contribute to our common spiritual and theological formation concerning the nature and scope of salvation.
2. Salvation is at the very heart of the Christian hope and the promise of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the gift of reconciliation and transformation, given to humanity by God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The gift of salvation is understood first and foremost by Christians as given by God through the incarnation, cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> There are many rich images of salvation in scripture which have been explored and developed by Christian theology over the centuries. More specifically, in the Old Testament salvation is frequently depicted as

deliverance from various evils: slavery in Egypt and exile in Babylon, as well as famine, attacks from enemies and various forms of suffering. In the New Testament, the theme of salvation as deliverance continues, but the focus is sin, disease and death. For many, the need for salvation is understood to be the consequence of the Fall, the primal disobedience of humanity depicted in Genesis 3. Hence Paul writes to the Christians in Rome,

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

*Rom 3.23*

3. In both the Old and New Testaments, salvation is described as healing and as a movement from brokenness to wholeness. Salvation is also described as the welcoming home of the lost (Lk 15.11–24).
4. Although every human person is made by God, for God, and in the image of God (Gen 1.27), Christians recognize our common need for salvation from all that fractures our humanity and separates us from God and one another.<sup>2</sup> Salvation from sin and its consequences brings freedom, healing, sanctification and wholeness.

Christ did not come to condemn the world; Christ came that the world through him might be saved and delivered into fulness of life (Jn 3.16–17, 10.10; Mt 19.25–26). This deliverance involves nothing less than re-birth. In the words of Jesus to Nicodemus,

no one can enter the kingdom of God  
without being born of water and Spirit.

*Jn 3.5*

5. Hence, Anglicans are eager to extend an invitation to enter the waters of baptism (Mt 28.18–20) and encourage those baptized to grow in grace by the regular reception of the Holy Eucharist, the life of prayer and participation in Christian community and mission. At celebrations of the Holy Eucharist and Sunday services of the word, there is an expectation of corporate prayer and confession of sin, followed by absolution or assurance of pardon, which underscores that the life of every Christian involves ongoing repentance and amendment of life.
6. Among the images of salvation explored by Christians over the centuries, deliverance and healing are frequent. In the early Church,

Christians longed for deliverance from death and disease. Hence the Gospel was described as the medicine of immortality. This understanding of salvation as healing and the granting of wholeness stretches across the centuries; in the New Testament, the word we often translate 'saved' also means 'healed' or 'made well' (e.g. Mk 10.46–52). In the Reformation and early modern period, an emphasis was placed on deliverance from sin and guilt. Thus the forgiveness of sin through the gift of Christ on the cross is central to our understanding of salvation. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, there is a renewed recognition of communal and corporate sin, sometimes known as 'structural sin'. For example, in recent decades the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion<sup>3</sup> have encouraged a heightened awareness of the duty of care towards creation<sup>4</sup> and called for the challenging of the unjust structures of society. This renewed awareness of both the natural and the human environment has led to a call for both repentance and amendment of life.

7. Both scripture and Anglican liturgy<sup>5</sup> remind the faithful that the two great commandments are to love the Lord your God with all your heart,

mind, soul and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself (Mt 22.37–40). Sin occurs when these commandments are not obeyed. Indeed, sin stops humans from being who they most long to be (Rom 7.15). Thankfully, God's grace is stronger than human sin, for 'in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself' (2 Cor 5.19). The Good News of Jesus Christ is that God has acted through Christ's incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension and the gifting of the Holy Spirit, to effect the reconciliation of the world to God.

8. Scripture's accounts of Christ's salvific work on our behalf incorporate a variety of images. We find legal imagery (Rom 5.16); the payment of a ransom on our behalf (Mk 10.45); the finding and restoration of what was lost (Lk 15); and the healing of brokenness (e.g. Mk 2.1–12). All are insistent that it is through God the Holy Trinity, and specifically through the saving acts of Jesus Christ, that salvation is offered to humanity.<sup>6</sup>
9. Although Christians are enjoined to 'work out your salvation with fear and trembling' (Phil 2.12), they may also trust that the promises of God in scripture stand firm:

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

*Rom 8.1–2*

10. Jesus calls on his followers not to judge others (Mt 7.1–5; Lk 6.37), for salvation belongs to God's sovereign freedom. Paul, too, affirms that judgement belongs to God alone:

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me.

*1 Cor 4.3–5*

11. This is not an isolated saying, but a consistent teaching of Christ's ministry. The parable of the wheat and the tares (Mt 13.24–30) acknowledges that there is good and bad, a mixed crop, growing side by side before the harvest. Acting now to condemn or exclude would be premature, and risk uprooting God's harvest. In

this parable, Jesus' disciples are directed not to judge others,<sup>7</sup> let alone act on such judgement. It is God who will judge.

12. Many of the great theologians of the Christian tradition, notably Augustine of Hippo (354–430) and John Calvin (1509–1564), likewise teach that the Church is a 'mixed body' of the good and bad. Calvin writes that there is no pure Church in advance of the final judgement and criticizes those who have withdrawn from a genuine Church in attempt to shun those they perceive to be ungodly.<sup>8</sup> Augustine was emphatic about the power and freedom of God and appropriately humble about the ignorance of humanity concerning who is saved and who is not. The sovereign will of God, mysterious and inscrutable in its detail, means that the identification of who is saved belongs only to God:

Furthermore, who is so irreligious and foolish as to say that God cannot turn to good any of the evil wills of men he wishes, when and where he wishes? When he does this, he does it by mercy, and when he does not do it, it is by judgement that he does not do it, since

he has mercy on whomever he chooses,  
and he hardens the heart of whomever  
he chooses (Romans 9.18).<sup>9</sup>

13. For Calvin, we should not attempt to sift the wheat from the tares, for this belongs to God alone. This same tradition is clear that salvation is eternally and freely decreed by God alone. Like Augustine, Calvin emphasizes that salvation is God's choice:

Few, then, out of the great number of called are chosen; the calling, however, not being of that kind which enables believers to judge of their election.<sup>10</sup>

14. He recommends an acceptance that we do now know whether we are elect:

When unable clearly to ascertain the reason, let us not decline to be somewhat in ignorance in regard to the depths of the divine wisdom.<sup>11</sup>

15. Reflecting this tradition, Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, in drawing up the Book of Common Prayer, applied the principle of 'charitable presumption' in the service for the Burial of the Dead. The funeral collect first states the Christian hope of life eternal through Christ, applying it

experientially to our comfort in time of grief, then making the charitable presumption that the deceased person did have saving faith, because this can be known only to God, and concluding with a plea—made through Jesus Christ—that we too may be found acceptable in God’s sight at the Last Judgement:

O Merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life; in whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he die; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in him, shall not die eternally ... We meekly beseech thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness; that when we shall depart this life, we may rest in him, as our hope is this our brother doth; and that, at the general resurrection in the last day, we may be found acceptable in thy sight; and receive that blessing, which thy well-beloved Son shall then pronounce to all that love and fear thee, saying, Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world ...<sup>12</sup>

16. In his First Sermon on the Epistle of St Jude, Richard Hooker (1554–1600) followed up this idea. Hooker emphasizes that:

We, whose eyes are too dim to behold the inward man, must leave the secret judgment of every servant to his own Lord, accounting and using all men [i.e. people] as brethren [and sisters] both near and dear unto us, supposing Christ to love them tenderly, so as they keep the profession of the Gospel, and join in the outward communion of saints.

Hooker says again:

we must beware we presume not to sit as gods in judgment upon others, and rashly, as our conceit and fancy doth lead us, so to determine of this man, he is sincere, or of that man, he is an hypocrite; except by their falling away they make it manifest and known what they are. For who art thou that takest upon thyself to judge another before the time? Judge thyself.

Hooker concludes: 'We cannot examine the hearts of other men, we may [examine] our own.'<sup>13</sup>

17. The scriptures testify time and again to the love of God, which is to be reflected in the relations of Christians to one another. In the words of 1 Corinthians 13:

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

*1 Cor 13.4-7*

18. Salvation is about God drawing humanity close so that the alienation of sin might not permanently distance them from the God of love. We cannot earn salvation, as the epistles constantly remind us:

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast.

*Eph 2.8-9*

19. The yearning for salvation is experienced by all of creation (Rom 8.18–27). Salvation is already, but not yet, because while the forgiveness of God is experienced in this life, the reign of God will be fully realized when Christ comes again. In the present, we participate in the community of the body of Christ, the Church,<sup>14</sup> receive the sacraments of baptism and Holy Eucharist, live in the strength of the Holy Spirit, abide in communion with one another and seek in all things to prepare the way for the Lord's coming again. Thus it is possible to say that through the Cross of Christ we were saved, in the body of Christ we are being saved by the grace of God, and at the final judgement we will be saved.

Beloved, we are God's children now;  
what we will be has not yet been  
revealed. What we do know is this:  
when he is revealed, we will be like him,  
for we will see him as he is.

*1 Jn 3.2*

20. Our lives are transformed as we learn to forgive and be forgiven, all the while anticipating the full revelation and reality of the new heaven and new earth (Rev 21). In concert with our individual and

corporate calling,<sup>15</sup> we grow through grace in Christlikeness. This grace equips ‘the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ’ (Eph 4.12–13).

21. In conclusion, when Anglicans engage questions of soteriology, the theology of salvation, they do not approach it so much as a precise science as a healing art. The God who creates, redeems and sanctifies calls all people to grow in grace into the full stature of Christ. We are not called to judge the status of our fellow Christians. Salvation, and particularly who will be saved, is in God’s hands. Alleluia. Thanks be to God.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Rom 8.38–39*

<sup>1</sup> See the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation (1997), §10 *inter alia*, [www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezi-one-occidentale/luterani/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/1999-dichiarazione-congiunta-sulla-dottrina-della-giustificazione/en.html](http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezi-one-occidentale/luterani/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/1999-dichiarazione-congiunta-sulla-dottrina-della-giustificazione/en.html) (accessed April 2021). Also see the Anglican–Oriental Orthodox International Commission Agreed Statement 2017, *The Procession and Work of the Holy Spirit* (London: Anglican Consultative Council, 2017), §14: ‘We affirm that as the Father sent the Son for salvation, into the world in the Incarnation, so in the era that follows the Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord, the Father sent the Spirit into the world to the goal of sanctification of the created order, until the Lord comes again in glory.’ [www.anglicancommunion.org/media/312561/the-procession-and-work-of-the-holy-spirit-dublin-agreed-statement.pdf](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/312561/the-procession-and-work-of-the-holy-spirit-dublin-agreed-statement.pdf) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>2</sup> See in this volume *Created in the Image of God*, §19.

<sup>3</sup> The Five Marks of Mission:

The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service

4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

<sup>4</sup> See International Commission for Anglican–Orthodox Theological Dialogue (ICAOTD), *Stewards of Creation: A Hope-Filled Ecology* (London: Anglican Consultative Council, 2019), §§3 and 4, [https://anglicancommunion.org/media/421995/icaotd\\_stewards-of-creation-hope-filled-ecology\\_nov2020.pdf](https://anglicancommunion.org/media/421995/icaotd_stewards-of-creation-hope-filled-ecology_nov2020.pdf) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>5</sup> ICAOTD, *The Dublin Agreed Statement* (London: SPCK, 1984), §7: ‘Liturgy and all Christian worship are rooted in salvation history. Salvation history with all its mighty events in both the Old and New Covenants is confessed, celebrated and appropriated by means of the liturgical year.’ [www.anglicancommunion.org/media/103812/the\\_dublin\\_statement.pdf](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/103812/the_dublin_statement.pdf) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>6</sup> See the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation (1997), especially §16.

<sup>7</sup> See Anglican–Reformed International Commission, *God’s Reign and Our Unity* (London: SPCK, 1984), §28: ‘the Church, which is sent not to judge but to bring the word of salvation’; also §54: ‘With all Christians we acknowledge the necessity of faith for the reception of the salvation set forth and embodied

in baptism.’

[www.anglicancommunion.org/media/104250/1984\\_aco\\_warc\\_gods\\_reign\\_our\\_unity.pdf](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/104250/1984_aco_warc_gods_reign_our_unity.pdf) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>8</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), IV.1.13, <https://ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes/institutes.vi.ii.html> (accessed April 2021): ‘Thinking there is no church where there is not complete purity and integrity of conduct, they, through hatred of wickedness, withdraw from a genuine church, while they think they are shunning the company of the ungodly. They allege that the Church of God is holy. But that they may at the same time understand that it contains a mixture of good and bad, let them hear from the lips of our Saviour that parable in which he compares the Church to a net in which all kinds of fishes are taken, but not separated until they are brought ashore. Let them hear it compared to a field which, planted with good seed, is by the fraud of an enemy mingled with tares, and is not freed of them until the harvest is brought into the barn. Let them hear, in fine, that it is a thrashing-floor in which the collected wheat lies concealed under the chaff, until, cleansed by the fanners and the sieve, it is at length laid up in the granary.’ See also John Calvin, ‘Matthew 13.24–30’, in *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library), <https://ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom32/calcom32.ii.xx.html> (accessed April 2021).

<sup>9</sup> Augustine, ‘The Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Charity’, in *On Christian Belief*, trans. Matthew O’Connell (New York:

New City Press, 2005), 25.98, p. 328, available in an alternative translation at [www.newadvent.org/fathers/1302.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1302.htm), ch. 98 (accessed April 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III.24.8, <https://ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes/institutes.v.xxv.html> (accessed April 2021).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, III.24.14.

<sup>12</sup> The collect from the Order for the Burial of the Dead, Book of Common Prayer 1549 (italics added), [http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1549/Burial\\_1549.htm](http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1549/Burial_1549.htm) (accessed April 2021). See also the collect from the Book of Common Prayer 1662, [www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/book-common-prayer/burial-dead](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/book-common-prayer/burial-dead) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>13</sup> *The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine Mr. Richard Hooker*, ed. John Keble, 7th edn, rev. R. W. Church and F. Paget (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), vol. 3, 'Two Sermons upon Part of St. Jude's Epistle: Sermon I', paragraphs 11 and 13, pp. 366–8, [https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/923/Hooker\\_0172-03\\_EBk\\_v6.0.pdf](https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/923/Hooker_0172-03_EBk_v6.0.pdf) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>14</sup> See two statements from the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC): *Salvation and the Church* (London: Church House Publishing, 1987), [www.anglicancommunion.org/media/105239/ARCIC\\_II\\_Salvation\\_and\\_the\\_Church.pdf](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/105239/ARCIC_II_Salvation_and_the_Church.pdf) (accessed April 2021); and *Walking Together on the Way* (London: SPCK, 2018), [www.anglicancommunion.org/media/344839/walking-](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/344839/walking-)

together-on-the-way-spck-2018.pdf (accessed April 2021). *Walking Together on the Way*, §26, states: ‘God “desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2.4) through “the one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all” (1 Tim 2.5–6). Just as Jesus was sent by the Father for the salvation of the whole world (Jn 3.16–17), so the disciples are sent by the risen Lord to continue his work of salvation (Jn 20.21). The Church is the sacramental manifestation of the *missio Dei* ... The missionary identity of the Church is universal in scope. The missionary Church can thus be seen to bring to fulfilment the promise once made to Abraham that in him all the tribes of the earth would be blessed (Gen 12.1–3).’

See also ICAOTD, *The Dublin Agreed Statement*, §3: ‘The mystery of the Church cannot be defined or fully described. But the steadfast joy of people who discover new life and salvation in Christ through the Church reminds us that the Church itself is a lived experience. The Church is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and first-fruits of the Kingdom of God.’ And §60: ‘The Church baptizes her members into the death and resurrection of her Lord, bringing them from the state of sin and death into membership of his body and participation in his eternal life.’ See also the ICAOTD Cyprus Statement, *The Church of the Triune God* (London: Anglican Consultative Council, 2007), [www.anglicancommunion.org/media/103818/The-Church-of-the-Triune-God.pdf](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/103818/The-Church-of-the-Triune-God.pdf) (accessed April 2021).

<sup>15</sup> See IRAD, *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* (London: Anglican Consultative Council, 2020), §14: 'This points to the corporate salvation, which sees the embodiment of the divine perfection of humanity in a community of faith, the Body of Christ.'

[www.anglicancommunion.org/media/421817/koinonia-gods-gift-calling.pdf](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/421817/koinonia-gods-gift-calling.pdf) (accessed April 2021).