[SERMON SERIES 2023]

THE FAITH WE CONFESS

The 39 Articles of the Church of England

"Dear friends… I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people."
[Jude 3]

"It is not lawful for the church to order anything contrary to God's written Word. Nor may it expound one passage of Scripture so that it contradicts another passage."
[Article 20]

What does it mean to be Anglican?

The 39 Articles are a brief and condensed statement of what Anglican Christians believe and teach.

These carefully summarised statements are designed to help everyday believers like you and I in thinking, discussing, applying, and sharing our faith and remain a wonderful foundation for our spiritual health and maturity as we follow Jesus today.

The Articles are a skilfully framed, high-quality creed that give us a biblical, true and essential account of the Christian basics.

The *39 Articles of Religion* are one of three historic Formularies (i.e. constitutional documents) of the Church of England. They have given the Church its distinctive identity since the time of the Reformation and have had a profound influence on the Anglican church worldwide.

Far more than just satisfying historical curiosity, the *Articles* set out the **authorised doctrinal standard** of the Church of England and were designed to be the rule of Faith of every English Christian.

To this day they remain the **foundations of true Anglicanism.** They help us to see and hold to both the substance and spirit of biblical Christianity, confessing our faith in a wonderful and clear way. Throughout 2023 we're going to take some time to explore what they say.

This booklet gives a little introduction as we come to God's word together. I hope the series excites and encourages you with its relevance and hope.

Tom Brown
Vicar of Kirk Sandall, Edenthorpe & Barnby Dun
February 2023

Stepping Back in History

When Henry VIII decisively split from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534 there arose a clear need for **an established doctrinal standard to safeguard the Church of England from error**, and to act as a reference point during theological disputes.

By 1536 ten so-called *Articles* had been presented to the King, but these fell someway short of a comprehensive statement of faith. When Henry died in 1547, the Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) picked up where the King has started. Forty-Two *Articles* were then proposed in 1553, before being revised to a final Thirty-Nine.

Cranmer's main objective in all this was to establish a minimum of doctrinal order and **fix the bounds of permissible belief for Anglican clergy**. In 1571 Parliament made subscription to these *39 Articles of Religion* mandatory for all ministers and they have remained so ever since.

From 1571 down to this day not a single word in them has been altered.

These historic formularies were designed to give the English Church a solid grounding in the three fundamental areas of its life – doctrine, devotion and discipline. **The Articles provide its doctrinal framework**, the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) settled the pattern of its devotional life, and the Ordinal outlined what was expected of the clergy whose role was key to the church's discipline.

As King Charles I declared, they express "the true doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's word." Though another Charles now sits on the throne, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* remain not merely descriptive of what former generations thought, instead:

"They are Anglican DNA; the Church of England's theological identity card showing what it is Anglicanism has always stood for."

A Timeline of Events

(1517) **Luther's 95 Theses** challenges the corruption and immorality of Catholicism

Thomas Cranmer appointed Archbishop of Canterbury (1533)

(1534) King Henry VIII's Supremacy Act **officially severs ties with Rome**

10 Articles of Faith presented to the King (1536)

(1538) Henry formally excommunicated by Rome

42 Articles drafted by Thomas Cranmer (1553)

(1553-55) Protestant **Reformation** sweeps Europe

Catholic Queen **Mary I** crowned (1553)

(1555) Protestant Bishops **Latimer and Ridley** burned opposing Catholicism

Queen Elizabeth I passes the **Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity** re-establishing the CoE's independence, and uniform practice for her churches (1559)

(1570) Elizabeth formally excommunicated by Rome

39 Articles finalised and made mandatory for all Church of England ministers (1571)

The 39 Articles Today

Rather than a passing document, the Articles have stood the test of time.

At every ordination service in the Church of England, all clergy must refer to the Articles, and in their Declaration of Assent each is asked to affirm their loyalty to this inheritance of faith as their "inspiration and guidance under God." As a result, they remain an abiding test of soundness for clergy, and one measure of protection for congregations against false teachers.

> *"I, xxx, do so affirm, and accordingly declare my belief in the faith which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England bear witness (the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion,* The Book of Common Prayer *and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons); and in public prayer and administration of the sacraments, I will use only the forms of service which are authorized or allowed by Canon."*

Simply put, the *39 Articles* are **a statement of official, authorised Anglican doctrine** and they still bind those who make such declarations with integrity.

That means all genuine Anglicanism takes it theological bearings from the Articles, helping us to interpret the Scriptures and apply their teaching to any area of controversy. In the stormiest seas and most treacherous conditions the help to anchor us to the glorious gospel and its implications for the church.

"The 39 articles seem not only to catch the substance and spirit of biblical Christianity superbly well, but also provide as apt a model to confess the faith in a divided Church as the world has yet seen."

Series Overview

The table below shows the areas we're going to look at in 2023.

Date	Article(s) and Topic	Bible Passage(s)
5th Feb	**The Sufficiency of Scripture** Articles 6 & 7	2 Timothy 3:13-17
12th Feb	**The Sufficiency of Christ** Articles 11, 12 & 13	Galatians 2:15-21
19th Feb	**The Supremacy of Christ** Articles 15 & 18	Romans 5:15-21
4th Jun	**The Trinity** Article 1 (Trinity Sunday)	John 14
11th Jun	**The Father** Article 1	Isaiah 45:5-23
18th Jun	**The Son** Articles 2, 3 & 4	John 10:30-33
25th Jun	**The Spirit** Article 5	John 16:7-14
1st Oct	**Fallen Humanity** Article 9	Genesis 3:1-19
8th Oct	**Free Will vs God's Will** Articles 10 & 17	Ephesians 1:1-10
15th Oct	**The Blessing of the Church** Article 19	1 Peter 2:9-10
22nd Oct	**The Freedom of the Church** Article 34	Hebrews 13:7-13 Colossians 2:16-23
29th Oct	**The Authority and Limits of the Church** Articles 20 & 21	Acts 15:1-35 Matthew 16:1-9

The full text of each of the articles is laid out over the pages to come so you can read, ponder and digest as we work through this series together.

PART I: THE SUBSTANCE OF THE FAITH

1. Faith in the Holy Trinity

There is only one living and true God, who is eternal and without body, indivisible and invulnerable. He is of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. He is the maker and preserver of all things both visible and invisible. Within the unity of the Godhead there are three persons who are of one substance, power, and eternity – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There is only one living and true God. His existence is everlasting, without beginning or end. He is a spiritual being, not limited by a body. He is free from bodily desires and impulses His power, wisdom, and goodness, are infinite. Of this one true God there are three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three persons are identical in substance, power and eternal existence.

2. The Word, or Son of God, who Became Truly Man

The Son, who is the Word of the Father, was begotten from eternity of the Father, and is the true and eternal God, of one substance with the Father. He took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary, of her substance, in such a way that two whole and perfect natures, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided. Of these two natures, is the one Christ, true God and true man. He truly suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried, to reconcile the Father to us (restore a right relationship between the Father and us) and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt but also for all actual sins of men.

3. The Descent of Christ into the Realm of the Dead

Just as Christ died for us and buried, so also it is to be believed that he descended into the realm of the dead.

4. The Resurrection of Christ

Christ truly rose again from death and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all that belongs to the completeness of man's nature. In this body he ascended into heaven, where he is now seated until the last day, when he will return to judge all men.

5. The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. He is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, true and eternal God.

PART II: THE RULE OF FAITH

6. The Sufficiency of Scripture for Salvation

Holy Scripture contains all things necessary for salvation. Consequently whatever is not read in Scripture nor can be proved from Scripture cannot be demanded from any person to believe it as an article of the faith. Nor is any such thing to be thought necessary or required for salvation. By Holy Scripture is meant those canonical books of the Old and New Testaments whose authority has never been doubted within the church.

The Names and Number of the Canonical Books:

Genesis	2 Chronicles	Daniel
Exodus	Ezra	Hosea
Leviticus	Nehemiah	Joel
Numbers	Esther	Amos
Deuteronomy	Job	Obadiah
Joshua	Psalms	Jonah
Judges	Proverbs	Micah
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Nahum
1 Samuel	Songs of Solomon	Habakkuk
2 Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
1 Kings	Jeremiah (with	Haggai
2 Kings	Lamentations)	Zechariah
1 Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

And the other Books (as Jerome says) the Church reads for example in matters of life and instruction; but it does not apply them in any way to establish doctrine. There are:

The Third Book of Esdras	Wisdom	Dragon
The Fourth Book of Esdras	Jesus the Son of Sirach	The Prayer of Manasses
The Book of Tobias	Baruch the Prophet	The First Book of Maccabees
The Book of Judith	The Song of the Three Children	The Second Book of Maccabees
The rest of the Book of Esther	The Story of Susanna	
The Book of	Of Bel and the	

All the Books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and account them Canonical.

7. The Old Testament
The Old Testament is not contrary to the New, for in both the Old and New Testaments eternal life is offered to mankind through Christ. Hence he, being both God and man, is the only mediator between God and mankind. Those who pretend that the Patriarchs only looked for transitory promises must not be listened to. Although the law given by God through Moses is not binding on Christians as far as its forms of worship and ritual are concerned and the civil regulations are not binding on any nation state, nevertheless no Christian is free to disobey those commandments which may be classified as moral.

"The Old Testament is not contrary to the New, for in both the Old and New Testaments eternal life is offered to mankind through Christ."

---

8. Of the Three Creeds
The Nicene Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture. The three creeds, the Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed, and that known as the Apostles' Creed, ought to be wholeheartedly accepted and believed. This is because their contents may be proved by definite statements of Holy Scripture.

PART III: THE LIFE OF FAITH

A. Its Commencement (Articles 9-14)

9. Original or Birth-sin
Original sin is not found merely in the following of Adam's example (as the Pelagians foolishly say). It is rather to be seen in the fault and corruption which is found in the nature of every person who is naturally descended from Adam. The consequence of this is that mankind is far gone from its original state of righteousness. In our own nature we are predisposed to evil, the sinful nature in mankind always desiring to behave in a manner contrary to the Spirit. In every person born into this world there is fund this predisposition which rightly deserves God's anger and condemnation. This infection within human nature persists even within those who are regenerate. This desire of the sinful nature, which in Greek is called *fronema sarkos* and is variously translated the wisdom or

sensuality or affection or desire of the sinful nature, is not under control of God's law. Although there is no condemnation for those that believe and are baptized, nevertheless the apostle states that any such desire is sinful.

10. Free Will
The condition of humanity since the fall of Adam is such that we cannot turn and prepare ourselves by their own natural strength and good works for faith and for calling upon the name of the Lord. Hence we have no power to do good works which are pleasing and acceptable to God, unless the grace of God through Christ goes before us so that we may have a good will, and continues to work with us after we're given that good will.

11. The Justification of Man
We are accounted righteous before God solely on account of the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through faith and not on account of our own good works or of what we deserve. Consequently the teaching that we are justified by faith alone is a most wholesome and comforting doctrine. This is taught more fully in the homily on Justification.

"The teaching that we are justified by faith alone is a most wholesome and comforting doctrine."

---

12. Good Works
Although good works, which are the fruits of faith and follow on after justification, can never atone for our sins or face the strict justice of God's judgment, they are nevertheless pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ and necessarily spring from a true and living faith. Thus a living faith is as plainly known by its good works as a tree is known by its fruit.

13. Works Before Justification
Works done before receiving the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit are not pleasing to God. This is because they do not spring out of faith in Jesus Christ. Nor do they make people fit to receive grace or (as the schoolmen say) to deserve grace of congruity. On the contrary, because they are not done as God has willed and commanded that they should be done, it is undoubtedly the case that they have the nature of sin.

14. Works of Supererogation
The concept of voluntary works besides, over and above God's commandments, which are sometimes called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogance and impiety. By them mankind do declare not only that they render to God their proper duty but that they actually do more than their duty. But Christ says: "So you also, when you after done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unprofitable servants'" (Luke 17:10).

B. Its Course (15-18)

15. Of Christ Alone Without Sin
Christ, who truly took our human nature, was made like us in every respect except that of sin. From this he was clearly free in both body and spirit. He came to be the Lamb without blemish who, by the sacrifice of himself once made, should take away the sins of the world. Sin, as St. John says, was not in him. But all the rest of us, even though baptized and born again in Christ, still offend in many ways. if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

16. Sin After Baptism
Not every sin knowingly committed after baptism is sin against the Holy Spirit and unforgivable. Therefore the gift of repentance is not to be declared impossible for those who fall into sin after baptism. After we have received the Holy Spirit we may depart from the grace given to us and fall into sin, and we may also by the grace of God return and amend our lives. Therefore those who say that they are incapable of sinning any more in this life are to be condemned, as are those who deny the opportunity of forgiveness to those who truly repent.

17. Predestination and Election
Predestination to life is the eternal purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he has consistently decreed by his counsel which is hidden from us to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he has chosen in Christ out of mankind and to bring them through Christ to eternal salvation as vessels made for honour. Hence those granted such an excellent benefit by God are called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working at the appropriate time. By grace they obey the calling; they are freely justified, are made sons of God by adoption, are made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ,

they walk faithfully in good works and at the last by God's mercy attain eternal happiness.

The reverent consideration of this subject of predestination and of our election in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant, and inexpressible comfort to the godly and to those who feel within themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, putting to death the deeds of the sinful and earthly nature and lifting their minds up to high and heavenly things. This consideration establishes and confirms their belief in the eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ and kindles a fervent love towards God. But for inquisitive and unspiritual persons who lack the Spirit of Christ to have the sentence of God's predestination continually before their eyes is a dangerous snare which the devil uses to drive them either into desperation or into recklessly immoral living (a state no less perilous than desperation).

Furthermore we need to receive God's promises in the manner in which they are generally set out to us in Holy Scripture, and in our actions we need to follow that will of God which is clearly declared to us in the Word of God.

"The subject of predestination and our election in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant, and inexpressible comfort to the godly."

---

18. Obtaining Salvation Only by the Name of Christ
Those who presume to say that every person shall be saved by the rule of life, religion, or sect that they profess, provided they make diligent efforts to live by that rule and the light of nature, must be regarded as accursed. For Holy Scripture declares to us that it is only in the name of Jesus Christ that men must be saved.

PART IV: THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

A. The Church (19-22)

19. The Church
The visible church of Christ is a congregation of believers in which the pure Word of God is preached and in which the sacraments are rightly administered according to Christ's command in all those matters that are necessary for proper administration.

As the churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred, so also the church of Rome has erred, not only in their practice and forms of worship but also in matters of faith.

20. The Authority of the Church
The church has authority to decree forms of worship and ceremonies and to decide in controversies concerning the faith. However, it is not lawful for the church to order anything contrary to God's written Word. Nor may it expound one passage of Scripture so that it contradicts another passage. So, although the church is a witness and guardian to Holy Scripture, it must not decree anything contrary to Scripture, nor is it to enforce belief in anything additional to Scripture as essential to salvation.

"It is not lawful for the church to order anything contrary to God's written Word."

---

21. The Authority of General Councils
General Councils may not gather together without the commandment and will of princes. And when they be gathered together, (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof of all not be governed with the Spirit and Word of God,) they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture.

22. Purgatory
The Roman Catholic doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping, and adoration (both of images and of relics), and the invocation of saints is a futile thing foolishly conceived and grounded on no evidence of Scripture. On the contrary this teaching is repugnant to the Word of God.

B. Ministry (23-24)

23. Ministering in the Congregation
It is not right for any person to take upon themselves the office of public preaching or of administering the sacraments in the congregation before they have been lawfully called and sent to perform these tasks. The lawfully called and sent are those who have been chosen and called to this

work by those who have had a public authority given to them in the congregation to call and send such ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

24. Speaking in the Congregation in a Language that People Understand

It is plainly repugnant to the Word of God and to the custom of the early church for public prayer or the administration of the sacraments in a language not understood by the people.

C. The Sacraments (25-31)

25. The Sacraments

The sacraments instituted by Christ are not only badges or tokens of the profession of Christians but are also sure witnesses and effectual signs of God's grace and good will towards us. Through them he works invisibly within us, both bringing to life and also strengthening and confirming our faith in him.

There are two sacraments instituted by Christ our Lord in the Gospel – Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The five that are commonly called sacraments (confirmation, penance, ordination, marriage, and extreme unction) are not to be regarded as Gospel sacraments. This is because they are either a corruption of apostolic practice or states of life as allowed in the Scriptures. They are not of same nature as the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper since they do not have any visible sign or ceremony instituted by God.

The sacraments were not instituted by Christ to be gazed at or carried about but to be used properly. It is only in those who receive them worthily that they have a beneficial effect or operation. As Paul the apostle says, those who receive them in an unworthy manner bring condemnation upon themselves (1 Corinthians 11:29).

As Anglicans we interpret our liturgy in light of the Articles not vice versa.

---

26. The Sacraments are Not Rendered Ineffectual by the Unworthiness of the Minister

Although in the visible church the evil are always mingled with the good and sometimes evil people possess the highest rank in the ministry of the Word and sacraments, nevertheless since they do not do these things in their own name but in Christ's and minister by his commission and authority, we may use their ministry both in hearing God's Word and in receiving the sacraments. The effect of Christ's institution is not taken away by the wickedness of these people, nor is the grace of God's gifts diminished, so long as the sacraments are received by faith and rightly. The sacraments are effectual because of Christ's institution and promise, even though they may be administered by evil men.

Nevertheless, it belongs to the discipline of the church that investigation be made into evil ministers. Those who are accused by witnesses having knowledge of their offenses and who in the end are justly found guilty, should be disposed.

27. Baptism

Baptism is not only a sign of profession and a mark of difference by which Christians are distinguished from those who are not baptized. It is also a sign of regeneration or new birth, through which, as through an instrument, those who receive baptism in the right manner are grafted into the church, the promises of the forgiveness of sin and of our adoption as children of God by the Holy Spirit are visibly signed and sealed, faith is confirmed, and grace is increased by virtue of prayer to God. The baptism of young children is undoubtedly to be retained in the church as that which agrees best with Christ's institution.

28. Of the Lord's Supper

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the mutual love that Christians ought to have among themselves. Rather, it is a sacrament of our redemption through Christ's death. To those who rightly, worthily, and with faith receive it, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ, and similarly the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation (the change of the substance of the bread and wine) in the Supper of the Lord cannot be proved from Holy Scripture, but is

repugnant to the plain teaching of Scripture. It overthrows the nature of a sacrament and has given rise to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only in a heavenly and spiritual manner. The means by which the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is by faith.

"The means by which the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is by faith."

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not instituted by Christ to be reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

29. The Wicked Who Partake of the Lord's Supper Do Not Eat the Body of Christ

The wicked and those who lack a living faith, although they physically and visibly 'press with their teeth' (as St. Augustine says) the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, nevertheless are in no way partakers of Christ. Rather, by eating and drinking the sign or sacrament of so great a thing, they bring condemnation upon themselves.

30. Reception in Both Kinds

The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the laity. For by Christ's institution and commandment both parts of the Lord's sacrament ought to be administered to all Christian people alike.

31. The Oblation of Christ Finished Upon the Cross

The offering of Christ made once is the perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual. There is no other satisfaction for sin but this alone. Consequently, the sacrifices of masses, in which it was commonly said that the priest offered Christ for the living and dead so as to gain remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits.

D. Discipline (32-36)

32. Marriage of Priests

It is not commanded by any decree of God that bishops, presbyters, or deacons take a vow of celibacy or abstain from marriage. So it is lawful for

them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion when they judge that this will promote godliness

33. The Excommunicated: How they are to be Avoided

Any person who has openly been denounced by the church and justly cut off from its fellowship and excommunicated is to be regarded by the whole body of the faithful as a 'pagan and swindler' until he is openly reconciled by repentance and received back into the church by a judge who has the necessary authority in such matters.

34. The Customs of the Church

It is not necessary that customs and forms of worship be exactly the same everywhere. Throughout history they have differed. They may be altered according to the differing nations, times, and habits of people provided that nothing is commanded contrary to God's Word. Whoever by their own private judgment openly, willingly, and deliberately breaks those customs and forms of worship of the church which do not contradict the Word of God and are approved by common authority, is to be openly rebuked. This is so that others will be afraid to act similarly, and in so doing offend against the common order of the church, to undermine the authority of the state's representative and to wound the consciences of weak Christians.

Every particular or national church has authority to command, change, or abolish the ceremonies or forms of worship of the church which are appointed by mankind's authority provided that everything is done for the building up of Christian people.

35. The Homilies

The second Book of Homilies contains godly and wholesome teaching which is necessary for these times, as does the first book of Homilies published during the reign of Edward VI. We therefore judge that they ought to be read diligently and distinctly in the churches by the ministers so that they may be understood by the people.

The names of the Homilies:

1. Of the right Use of the Church.
2. Against peril of Idolatry.
3. Of repairing and keeping clean of Churches.
4. Of good Works: first of Fasting.
5. Against Gluttony and

Drunkenness.
6. Against Excess of Apparel.
7. Of Prayer.
8. Of the Place and Time of Prayer.
9. That Common Prayers and Sacraments ought to be ministered in a known tongue.
10. Of the reverend estimation of God's Word.
11. Of Alms-doing.
12. Of the Nativity of Christ.
13. Of the Passion of Christ.
14. Of the Resurrection of Christ.
15. Of the worthy receiving of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ.
16. Of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.
17. For the Rogation-days.
18. Of the State of Matrimony.
19. Of Repentance.
20. Against Idleness.
21. Against Rebellion.

36. The Consecration of Bishops and Ministers

The Book of Consecration of Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, as set forth by the General Convention of this Church in 1792, contains all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering; neither has it anything that of itself, is superstitious and ungodly. And, therefore, whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to said Form, we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered.

E. Church-State Relations (37-39)

37 The State and its Civil Representatives

The power of the Civil Magistrate extends to all people, as well as Clergy as Laity, in all things temporal; but has no authority in things purely spiritual. And we hold it to be the duty of all men who are professors of the Gospel, to pay respectful obedience to the Civil authority, regularly and legitimately constituted.

The original 1571, 1662 text of this article reads as follows:

The sovereign has the chief power in the realm of England and his other possessions. The supreme government of all in this realm, whatever their station, whether ecclesiastical or civil, and in all matters, belongs to him and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

When we attribute to the sovereign the chief government (a title which seems to have offended some slanderous persons) we do not grant our rulers the ministry of either God's Word or of the sacraments. This is also made clear in the Injunctions published by Queen Elizabeth I. By this we

acknowledge only the prerogative which we see in Holy Scripture God has given to all godly rulers. They should rule all people committed to their charge by God, whatever their station or rank, whether ecclesiastical or secular, and restrain with the civil power those who are stubborn or practice evil.

The bishop of Rome (the Pope) has no jurisdiction in this realm of England.

The laws of the realm may punish Christian people with death for heinous and grave offenses.

It is lawful for Christian people at the command of the state to carry weapons and serve in wars.

38. Private Property
Contrary to what some Anabaptists claim, the wealth and possessions of Christians are not common, as far as the right, title, and possession of them is concerned. Nevertheless, everyone ought to give freely to the poor from what he possesses, according to his means.

39. A Christian's Oath
We believe that the vain and rash swearing of oaths is forbidden to Christians by our Lord Jesus and James. However, we judge that the Christian faith does not prohibit the swearing of an oath when the state requires it if in a cause where the faithfulness and love justify it, and according to the prophet Jeremiah's teaching, in justice, judgment and truth.

"In the confusion caused by recent developments, many parts of the Anglican Communion have returned to these great foundations to satisfy a genuine hunger for both Anglican tradition and sound Christian doctrine."