



ACNA West Board of Examining Chaplains www.acnawest.org
And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. Jeremiah 3:15

ACNA West Presbyteral Exam

Church History & Anglican Church History Essay Study Guide

Candidates for the Presbyterate should also consult the [Church History & Anglican Church History Essay Questions for Candidate Preparation](#) document.

Church History/Anglican Church History

Patristics & Early Church Postulants need to describe how from its ancient beginnings, the Church of England has been a “patristic church.” (A patristic church literally is a “church of the Fathers.”) In this case it means a church that faithfully reflects the teaching of Jesus and the holy apostles as understood and interpreted by the undivided church of over 1000 years and defined by the seven Ecumenical Councils. This faith of the undivided church is the very faith most of the English reformers had in mind as they sought to reform a corrupted medieval church to its apostolic roots. In the case of the Church of England, it is a church originally founded before the 4th Century A.D. in England by anonymous missionaries teaching that apostolic faith inaugurated by Jesus and His holy apostles. Therefore, it is essential for those in Anglican orders to know that faith well before proceeding to understand the later developments in doctrine or the corruptions and heresies, both ancient and modern. This is so we can teach about the Trinity, creation, sin, the incarnation of God’s Son, salvation, sanctification in word leading to eternal life, and we can defend and protect the flock of God from demonic and false human teachings that lead to destruction. Below you can find resources that will enable you to show competency in understanding the “teaching of the apostles” and interpreting the Holy Scriptures through that lens.

For this reason, Anglicans have always been deeply immersed in the writings of these fathers and built our understanding of the Church and the Scriptures based on their teachings. This is what makes us a “patristic” church. These fathers passed on a living tradition of how to be the church and how to understand the Holy Scriptures that we honor and respect. When and where we find them in substantial agreement, we feel that modern and late modern theologians and teachers must do

the “heavy lifting” when they disagree with this substantial agreement of the fathers.

For this reason, all ordained people can benefit from reading these earliest Fathers of the Church.

Candidates are invited to read the following early church and foundations of the Faith:

- Read Ignatius of Antioch (*Letters*) and the *Diache* and Irenaeus of Lyons to begin to grasp what the first Christians believed and taught and how they interpreted Scriptures
- Read Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catechetical Lectures* or *Mystagogical Catecheses*)
- Read Athanasius of Alexandria's *On the Incarnation*
- Read Augustine of Hippo's *On the Trinity*
- Read Basil the Great's *On the Holy Spirit*
- Read Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils: (325-787) Their History and Theology*: know each council, its date and the primary correction or teaching it produced

Medieval & Reformation Church Postulants should know about the Great Schism which took place around 1054 A.D. In this tragic break, ending a millennium of Christian unity, the undivided church was profoundly broken by schism. Be able to describe how the Western Church continued to develop the power of the papacy through its zenith in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, papal schism (“the Babylonian captivity of the papacy”) in the early 14th century and the Reformation (and next great schism) in the sixteenth century. Be prepared to speak about these developments to explain how and why the Reformation took place. Especially it is important for candidates to know what major events shaped the English Church into the Anglican Church leading up to the eighteenth century just prior to the American Revolution and the development of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. Below you will find various topics that you should at least be able to recognize and describe briefly.

Read J. R. H Moorman, *A History of the Church of England*: focus study on the English Reformation, especially the development of the Prayer Book, Henry VIII's

break with Rome (and the 1534 Act of Supremacy), the Elizabethan Settlement (1558 Act of Uniformity and Act of Supremacy)

Read this article as a basic introduction to the history of the church from the last ecumenical council to the Reformation.

Modern Church In this section we are preparing to be able to describe how the Anglican Church in North America ultimately came to be. So we are studying the modern Church looking at the following movements and events leading up to the rise of Liberal Christianity and Liberal Anglicanism in particular and the decisions and unbiblical practices that led to the establishment of the ACNA and of GAFCON. Yet this period also is inhabited by godly men and women whose faith and action caused Anglicanism to grow and spread to 39 provinces in nearly as many nations with over seventy million members. We need to be able to tell this story of phenomenal growth and especially how it was produced as fruit from the missionary movement in the global South. This knowledge is not only important in order to impart a sense of joy and thanksgiving in our members in America who tend to see Anglicanism as a very small movement but also for lifting their eyes to the nations of the world for the launching of new missionary movements in our own time.

From the Moorman book, take note of:

- The glorious revolution and Non-Jurors
- The evangelical movement and Tractarians
- The Wesleyan Movement
- The Oxford Movement and Tractarians
- Missionary Movements
- Development of the Anglican Communion and Lambeth Conferences
- American Anglican Church History:
 - Foundations in North America
 - Colonial Period
 - Great Awakening
 - Revolutionary War
 - Founding of the Episcopal Church
 - American Missionary Work

- Rise of Liberal Christianity
- Foundation of the ACNA