TIMELINE OF ANGLICAN CHRISTIANITY

INSULAR CELTIC CHRISTIANITY

c. 30 – The Death and Resurrection of Jesus

c. 37 – Christianity brought to Britain (according to St. Gildas, d. 570)

c. 62 – The Deaths of Peter and Paul

200s - Christianity has been established in parts of the British Isles with a distinctive regional tradition:
• Focus on monasticism (some evidence of monastic communities made up of married couples)
• Possibly less clergy-centric (When Augustine comes and pushes for changes, the Celtic bishops wouldn’t agree without conferring with their people)
• Distinct monastic tonsure
• Different penitential routine (entirely private vs. public)
• Different date of Easter
• Baptismal Rite considered “incomplete” by Rome (perhaps no Confirmation takes place or perhaps only a single immersion during the baptismal words)
• Unique tradition of “living in exile” for Christ

254-257 – Stephen I first claims place of primary for Bishop of Rome

304 – Martyrdom of first British Christians (Alban, Aaron & Julius)

313 – Christianity legally permitted in the Roman Empire by Emperor Constantine I

314 - Council of Arles convenes to condemn the heresy of Donatism (3 British bishops are among the representation – the British bishops are accused by some of Pelagianism)

325 – The ecumenical Council of Nicea meets to discuss the nature of God and Jesus; the first Nicene Creed is produced as a summary of faith.

380 – Christianity becomes the official religion of the Empire

381 – The ecumenical Council of Constantinople meets to discuss the Trinity; the Nicene Creed is expanded to explain more about the Holy Spirit.

393,397 – The local synods of Hippo and Carthage, respectively, ratify the listing of authoritative Christian Scriptures, determining what will become known as the New Testament.

395 – The Roman Empire is divided between the two sons of Theodosius I

407 – The Romans leave Britain and leave the Celts to fend for themselves.

431 – The ecumenical Council of Ephesus meets to refute the heresy of Nestorianism. It declares that the Virgin Mary was the God-Bearer, that is to say that from the moment Jesus was conceived he was fully God, as well as fully human.

451 – The ecumenical Council of Chalcedon meets to discuss the humanity and divinity of Christ, determining that he had two natures (human and divine) united together in one person. The Definition of Chalcedon is drafted to explain this.

476 – The Western Roman Empire has fallen, leading to the so-called “Dark Ages”

c. 490 – Death of St. Patrick

500s – The Bishop of Rome begins using the title “Pope”

525 – The death of St. Brigid of Kildare (born around 451), who was a famous Irish abbess (some say even a bishop).

533 – The Second Council of Constantinople convenes to address heresies perpetuated by Origen.

563 – St. Columba travels to Iona from Ireland and sets up an Abbey there

597 – Augustine sent by Pope Gregory I to Britain, becomes Archbishop of Canterbury, mass baptism of King of Northumbria and his subjects

* Celtic bishops refuse to recognize Augustine’s authority.

601 – Pope sends more missionaries to British Isles

607 – Pope Boniface III declares that the Pope is the “universal bishop”

653 – Missionaries from Rome convert the Kingdom of Mercia

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ROMANIZATION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

664 - Synod of Whitby (Celtic Christian practices suppressed, in favor of Roman practices)

* Most of Irish had conformed, as in the date of Easter, Iona is sole hold-out

680-681 – The Third Council of Constantinople defines that Jesus, having two natures, also had two wills, human and divine, both equal (but the human also subjected to the divine).

715 – Pope Gregory II claims that the Pope is the “vicar of Christ”

787 – The Second Council of Nicea condemns iconoclasm and declares that the use of statues and icons is permissible in worship as long as the images themselves are not worshipped.

860 – Pope Nicholas I claims that the Pope has universal jurisdiction over the whole Church

900s (late) – Religious revival in England; many monasteries are founded.

1054 – Following feud between the Pope in Rome and the Patriarch of Constantinople about which bishop in the church takes a place of primacy, the Church splits along East/West lines.
1066 – William the Conquerer invades England from Normandy. The result is that English Christianity is now even more under the influence of European Christianity, i.e. Rome. Reforms follow: local synods revived, clergy celibacy is required, European canon law is adopted.

1200s – Friars arrive in England and set up missions in most towns.

1215 – The list of the seven traditional sacraments becomes standardized across the Western Church.

1306 – English Parliament passes the Statue of Provisors under Edward I, stating that no tax imposed by religious persons can be sent out of the country.

1351 – English Parliament passes another Statue of Provisors during the reign of Edward III, stating that the Pope has no authority over English property and cannot give away English benefices and land to anyone.

1353 – English Parliament passes the Statute of Praemunire asserts that the England is sovereign unto itself, no English citizens may appeal to any higher power (such as the Vatican or any other) and state “that the right of recovering the presentsments to churches, prebends, and other benefices … belongeth only to the king’s court of the old right of his crown, used and approved in the time of all his progenitors kings of England”

1382 – John Wycliffe, an advocate for making the Scriptures available in the vernacular, finishes the first English translation of the Bible.

1498 – Erasmus, a catholic priest and scholar who sought to reform the Roman Catholic Church, first visits England.

1509 – Henry VIII becomes King of England.

1529 – English Parliament passes legislation stating that clergy subject to English courts (not special church courts as before)

1530 – English Parliament reinstates Praemunire, stating that there is no higher power or law for English subjects beyond England.

1532 – Parliament’s First Act of Annates holds all but 5% of money normally sent to the Rome

1533 – Parliament passes Cromwell’s Act in Restraint of Appeals, stating that no English subjects can appeal legal decision to a power outside of England.

THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

1534 – Parliament’s Act of Supremacy declare that the monarch of England, rather than the Pope, has supremacy over the English Church, effectively declaring the independence of the English Church.

1536 – The First Suppression Act begins to dissolve all small and struggling, or corrupt, monasteries and to cede their assets to the Crown.
– *The Ten Articles* are published by Thomas Cranmer. These are the first guidelines for the newly independent Church of England:

1. The binding authority of the Bible, the three ecumenical creeds (Apostles’, Nicene, Athanasian), and the first four ecumenical councils
2. Baptism is necessary for salvation, even for infants
3. Sacramental confession and absolution are "expedient and necessary"
4. The substantial, real, corporal presence of Christ’s body and blood under the form of bread and wine in the Eucharist
5. Justification by faith, joined with charity and obedience
6. The use of images in churches
7. The honoring of saints and the Virgin Mary
8. The invocation of saints
9. The observance of various rites and ceremonies as good and laudable, such as vestments, holy water, candle processions, imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday
10. The doctrine of purgatory, and prayers for the dead in purgatory (but purgatory is declared a non-essential doctrine)

1539 – *The Second Suppression Act* effectively dissolves all remaining monasteries and convents

– *The Six Articles* are published, with the input of German reformers. The articles affirmed

1. The doctrine transubstantiation of the Eucharist
2. The reasonableness of withholding of the cup from the laity during communion,
3. The importance of clerical celibacy,
4. The observance of vows of chastity,
5. Permission for private masses,
6. The importance of confession to a priest

1544 – The Church publishes an *Exhortation and Liturgy* for use at the Mass. This is the first liturgical work to be published in the vernacular (English).

1547 – Henry VIII dies, and his son Edward VI ascends to the throne at the age of 16.

1548 – An *Order of the Communion*, probably written by Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer, is published and is the first Communion liturgy entirely in English.

1549 – First *Book of Common Prayer* is published.

1552 – Second *Book of Common Prayer* is published.

– The 42 *Articles of Religion*, largely the work of Thomas Cranmer, are issued.

1553 – Edward dies and Mary becomes Queen and restores England as part of the Roman Catholic Church

1558 – Mary dies and Elizabeth I becomes Queen and re-establishes the Church of England. She proposes “the Elizabethan Settlement,” striving to make the English Church a middle road between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.


1563 – The Articles of Religion are revised to be 39 *Articles of Religion.*

1603 – King James I authorizes the Bible translation that bears his name.

1607 – The first Church of England mission in the American colonies is established at Jamestown, VA.
1611 – The King James Version of the Bible is published.

1633 – William Laud becomes Archbishop of Canterbury, tries to restore some of the lost ceremonial of the church, and to enforce conformity to the Prayer Book among all clergy.

1640 – In the midst of the growing civil unrest in England, William Laud is arrested.

1642 – The First English Civil War begins

1645 – William Laud is executed.

1649 – King Charles I is executed; his son Charles II remains in Europe in exile.

1649-1659 – England is declared “a Commonwealth” (a republic). Oliver Cromwell becomes Lord Protector and during his tenure the use of the Prayer Book is outlawed and churches and sacred art are defaced.

1658 – Cromwell dies; his son Richard takes over briefly as Lord Protector.

1659 – Richard Cromwell loses power and abdicates as Lord Protector in 1659. The Protectorate is abolished.

1660 – King Charles II returns to England and is restored to the throne. The use of the Prayer Book is also restored, with calls for revision.

1662 – The fourth and current Church of England prayer book is adopted. This remains the most common prayer book in use by Anglicans around the world.

THE AMERICAN CHURCH

1776 – The Declaration of Independence is signed. American clergy, who took an oath of loyalty to the English Crown at ordination, are caught in a bind.

1784 – The Consecration of Samuel Seabury as Bishop in Scotland by Non-Juror bishops.

1785 – First ordinations on American soil.

1789 – Formal establishment of an independent American Church, by a meeting of clergy representatives from 9 dioceses in Philadelphia (the first General Convention).

– First American version of the Book of Common Prayer is published. It uses the Communion liturgy from the Scottish Non-jurors.

1792 – Thomas John Claggett becomes the first Bishop is consecrated on American soil.

1794 – The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas is founded and is the first independent black church founded in Philadelphia (and one of the first in the US).

1802 – Absalom Jones becomes the first black priest in the American Church.

1833 – The Oxford Movement begins in England and calls the church to remember its catholicity.
1847 – The Society of the Holy Cross, the first monastic order in the Anglican Communion since the Reformation, is established at Valle Crucis, NC

1860s – The revival of the Order of Deaconesses among Anglicans.

1867 – The first Lambeth Conference, a meeting of all Anglican bishop from around the world, meets in England, starting a tradition of decennial meetings of bishops.

1870 – William Reed Huntington, then rector of All Saints Church in Worcester, drafts an essay on necessary considerations for reunion with the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches.

1886 – Drawing from Huntington’s essay, the House of Bishops, meeting in Chicago, adopts the Quarilateral as a standard of essential points of unity for ecumenical collaboration:
   (1) the Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testament, are the revealed Word of God
   (2) The Nicene Creed is a sufficient statement of Faith
   (3) Use of the two sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, using the same elements and words dictated by Christ.
   (4) Continuation of the Historic Episcopate

1888 – The Lambeth Conference promulgates the Quadrilateral.

1892 – The second edition of the American Prayer Book is adopted.

1928 – A revised version of the *Book of Common Prayer* is adopted by the American Church.

1931 – The Union of Utrecht Churches (Old Catholics) enter into “inter-communion” with Anglicans, allowing mutual recognition of ministries and the sharing of clergy and sacraments.

1944 – The first woman, Li Tim Oi, is ordained an Anglican priest in China to serve amidst the chaos resulting from the Japanese invasion of China. *(Due to controversy, she resigns her license to function as a priest after World War II ends.)*

1950s – The Episcopal Church begins a relationship of intercommunion with the Polish National Catholic Church. *(Later terminated by the PNCC in 1978 over the issue of ordaining women.)*

1966 – A Church Tribunal dismisses heresy charges against Bishop Walter Righter, stating that ordaining a gay man to the priesthood does not constitute heresy nor that issues of human sexuality are part of the core doctrine of the church.

1967 – General Convention sets up and votes to fund the General Convention Special Program, intended to address social inequities that are not being addressed by existing church programs and agencies.

1969 – A Special General Convention is convened by Presiding Bishop John Hines to discuss the Special Program and to address how the church could respond to poverty, discrimination, and injustice.

1976 – The first 11 women priests were ordained illicitly in Philadelphia.

1977 – General Convention changes the canons to allow the ordination of women officially.
1979 – The current *Book of Common Prayer* adopted. This is the most substantial rewriting of a Prayer Book, anywhere in the Anglican Communion, since Cranmer’s 1552 prayer book.

1989 – The first female bishop, Barbara Harris, is consecrated in Boston.

2000 – The Episcopal Church enters into a “full communion” agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, allowing both churches to share sacraments and clergy.

2003 – Gene Robinson consecrated as first openly gay bishop.

2006 – Katharine Jefferts Schori is elected as the Presiding Bishop, becoming the first female primate in any Anglican province.

2010 – The Episcopal Church enters into a “full communion” agreement with the Moravians.