

31.8.73: 12.30 p.m. Third Full Draft

INTRODUCTION

1. Our intention has been to gain a deeper understanding of Ministry which is consonant with biblical teaching and with the traditions of our common inheritance, and to express in this document the consensus we have reached.\* This Statement is not designed to be an exhaustive treatment of Ministry, but seeks to investigate areas of agreement relating to points which have seemed to divide us in the past.
2. Within each of our two Churches there exists an ordained ministry amongst a diversity of forms of ministerial service. Of more specific ways of service, some are undertaken unofficially while others may receive a mandate from ecclesiastical authorities. The ordained ministry can only be rightly understood within this broader context.
3. The New Testament shows that ministry played an essential part in the life of the Church in the first century. The normative principles governing the task and function of the ministry are permanently defined in the New Testament documents. The early Churches may well have had considerable diversity in the structure of pastoral ministry, and development is already apparent in the New Testament itself. The emergence of the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter, and deacon required a longer period than the apostolic age, (though not as long as the emergence of the New Testament canon itself).

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\* cf. Agreed Statement on the Doctrine of the Eucharist para. 1.