



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
**Council for Christian Unity**

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## Canon B 43

### Of Relations with Other Churches

The full text with introductory notes

#### Clause 1:

***Invitations to others to share in or lead Church of England services in a Church of England place of worship.***

NB: This does not include presiding at Holy Communion.

1. (1) Who may be invited and what they may do.

*See CCU Resources paper A-1 for the list of Churches to which this canon applies.*

*See also paper B-4 re members of the Salvation Army and Quakers.*

1. (2) Permissions required in relation to specific tasks.

*See CCU Resource papers B-1-2 Section A, and B-1-3 Section A.*

1. (3) Re: Confirmations and Ordinations

1. (4) How these rules apply in cathedrals

1.

(1) A minister or lay person who is a member in good standing of a Church to which this Canon applies and is a baptised person may, subject to the provisions of this Canon, be invited to perform all or any of the following duties –

- a) to say or sing Morning or Evening Prayer or the Litany;
- b) to read the Holy Scriptures at any service;
- c) to preach at any service;
- d) to lead the Intercessions at the Holy Communion and to lead prayers at other services;
- e) to assist at Baptism or the Solemnisation of Matrimony or conduct a Funeral Service;
- f) to assist in the distribution of the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the people at the Holy Communion;

if the minister or lay person is authorised to perform a similar duty in his or her own Church.

(2) An invitation to perform in a parish church or other place of worship in the parish any of the duties mentioned in sub-paragraph (1) above, other than duties in connection with a service of ordination or confirmation, may be given only by the incumbent and may be given only if

(a) in the case of –

(i) any duty mentioned in sub-paragraph (1)(f) above or,

(ii) any duty mentioned in sub-paragraph (1)(a), (c) or (e) above, which is to be performed on a regular basis,

the approval of the bishop has been obtained; and

(b) in the case of any duty mentioned in sub-paragraph (i)(e) above, the persons concerned have requested the incumbent to give the invitation; and

(c) in the case of any duty mentioned in sub-paragraph (1)(a), (c) or (f) above, the approval of the parochial church council has been obtained.

(3) An invitation to perform in a parish church or other place of worship in the parish any duty in connection with a service of ordination or confirmation may be given only by the bishop and may be given only if the approval of the incumbent and the parochial church council has been obtained.

(4) Sub-paragraphs (2) and (3) above shall apply in relation to an invitation to perform in a cathedral church any of the duties mentioned in subparagraph (1) above subject to the following modifications –

(a) for any reference to the incumbent there shall be substituted –

(i) in the case of a dean and chapter cathedral, the dean and chapter, and

(ii) in the case of a parish church cathedral, the cathedral chapter; and

(b) the provisions relating to the approval of the parochial church council shall not apply.

**Clauses 2-6:*****Invitations to Church of England ministers to share in or lead services in other churches.***

*See CCU Resource papers B-1-2 Section B, and B-1-3 Section B*

2. Invitations to bishops
3. Invitations to priests and deacons
4. Restrictions on priests when invited to preside at Holy Communion
5. Restrictions on bishops and priests when invited to take part in ordinations
6. Invitations to deaconesses, lay workers and Readers

2. Notwithstanding any provision of any Canon, a bishop who receives from a person authorised by a Church to which this Canon applies an invitation to take part in a service may in the course of that service perform any duty assigned to him if—

- (a) the duty assigned to him is or is similar to a duty which he is authorised to perform in the Church of England; and
- (b) he has before accepting the invitation obtained
  - (i) the approval of the incumbent of the parish in which the service is to take place, and
  - (ii) in the case of an invitation to take part in a service in another diocese, the approval of the bishop of that diocese, and
  - (iii) in the case of an invitation to take part in the ordination or consecration of a minister of a Church to which this Canon applies, to take part in a service of confirmation or to preside at the Holy Communion, the approval of the archbishop of the province.

3. Notwithstanding any provision of any Canon, a priest or deacon of the Church of England who receives from a person authorised by a Church to which this Canon applies an invitation to take part in a service may in the course of that service perform any duty assigned to him if—

- (a) the duty assigned to him is or is similar to a duty which he is authorised to perform in the Church of England, and
- (b) he has before accepting the invitation obtained
  - (i) the approval of the incumbent of the parish in which the service is to take place, and
  - (ii) in the case of an invitation to take part in the ordination or consecration of a minister of a Church to which this Canon applies or to preside at the Holy Communion, the approval of the bishop of the diocese in which the service is to take place, and
  - (iii) in the case of an invitation to take part in any service on a regular basis, the approval of both the bishop of the diocese and the parochial church council of the parish in which the service is to take place.

4. In the case of an invitation to preside at the Holy Communion, the archbishop shall not give his approval under paragraph 2 above and the bishop shall not give his approval under paragraph 3 above unless the archbishop or the bishop, as the case may be, is satisfied that there are special circumstances which justify acceptance of the invitation and that the rite and the elements to be used are not contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter.

5. A bishop or priest who has accepted an invitation to take part in the ordination or consecration of a minister of a Church to which this Canon applies may not, by the laying on of hands or otherwise, do any act which is a sign of the conferring of Holy Orders, unless that Church is an episcopal Church with which the Church of England has established intercommunion.

6. Notwithstanding any provision of any Canon, a deaconess, lay worker or reader of the Church of England who receives from a person authorised by a Church to which this Canon applies an invitation to take part in a service may in the course of that service perform any duty assigned to him or her if—

- (a) the duty so assigned is or is similar to a duty which he or she is authorised to perform in the Church of England; and
- (b) he or she has before accepting the invitation obtained the approval of the incumbent of the parish in which the service is to take place and also, in the case of an invitation to take part in a service on a regular basis, the approval of both the bishop of the diocese and the parochial church council of that parish.

**Clause 7:**

***Appeal procedure where an incumbent withholds approval needed under clause 3 or 6.***

7. Where, on an application under paragraph 3 or 6 above for the approval of an incumbent, that approval is withheld, the applicant may appeal to the bishop of the diocese in which the service is to take place and if, after considering the views of the applicant and the incumbent, the bishop determines that approval has been unreasonably withheld, the bishop may authorise the applicant to take part in the service in question and where the bishop so determines the bishop shall inform the incumbent in writing of the reasons for that determination.

**Clause 8:**

***The scope accorded to the PCC in granting approvals under this Canon***

8. Where the approval of the parochial church council is required for the giving or accepting of an invitation under the preceding provisions of this Canon, that approval may be given in respect of the performance of such duties as may be specified in the approval by such person or persons, or such class of persons, as may be so specified and may either be given generally for an unlimited period or given subject to such limitations, whether as to duration or occasion, as may be so specified.

**Clauses 9 and 10:**

***Invitations to members of other Churches to hold joint worship, or hold services according to their own tradition, in Church of England places of worship.***

*See CCU Resource paper B-1-2 Section C.*

9. In relation to a parish  
10. In relation to a cathedral

9. The incumbent of a parish may, with the approval of the parochial church council and the bishop of the diocese, invite members of another Church to which this Canon applies to take part in joint worship with the Church of England or to use a church in the parish for worship in accordance with the forms of service and practice of that other Church on such occasions as may be specified in the approval given by the bishop.

10. The dean and chapter or the cathedral chapter of any cathedral church may with the approval of the bishop of the diocese invite members of another Church to which

this Canon applies to take part in joint worship with the Church of England, or to use the cathedral church for worship in accordance with the forms of service and practice of that other Church, on such occasions as may be specified in the approval given by the bishop.

**Clause 11:**

***Necessary approval from bishops and archbishops must be in writing***

11. Any approval required by this Canon to be obtained from a bishop or archbishop shall be in writing and shall be given in accordance with such directions as may from time to time be given by the House of Bishops of the General Synod.

**Clause 12:**

***Churches to which this Canon applies – together with definitions of terms.***

- 12.
- (1) This Canon applies to every Church to which the Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure 1988 applies.
- (2) In this Canon ‘incumbent’, in relation to a parish, includes –
- (a) in a case where the benefice concerned is vacant (and paragraph (b) below does not apply), the rural dean and
- (b) in a case where a suspension period (within the meaning of the Pastoral Measure 1983) applies to the benefice concerned, the priest-in-charge, and
- (c) in a case where a special cure of souls in respect of the parish has been assigned to a vicar in a team ministry by a scheme under the Pastoral Measure 1983 or by his licence from the bishop, that vicar,
- and ‘place or worship’ means a building or part of a building licensed for public worship.