

# Church Crisis

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The resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, over historic abuse allegations is a moment of reckoning for the Church of England. His decision to step down, citing “personal and institutional responsibility,”<sup>0</sup> underscores the gravity of accountability in safeguarding children ~ a responsibility that the Church and its leaders have, in past decades, often overlooked. The fallout reflects broader issues around transparency and reform within religious institutions that remain unresolved, even after similar crises in churches across the globe.

This resignation brings painful truths to light. Many within the Anglican community are grappling with the painful legacy of abuse and cover-ups that went unaddressed for years. The cases associated with the Christian camps in question reveal abuse not only of power but also of trust. The Church, for its part, must ask why such abuses went unchecked despite being known to church leaders since at least 2013. When high-ranking officials fail to take definitive action, it betrays not only the victims but the entire faith community. The resignation of the archbishop highlights the need for clear protocols, transparent investigations, and, above all, the moral resolve to prevent further abuses. As spiritual leaders, bishops and archbishops must embody the principles they preach, taking swift action to root out abuse and restore faith in their institutions.

Today’s churchgoers seek more than sermons and symbolism; they demand honesty and commitment to protection. Moving forward, church leaders must show through their actions that safeguarding young people and vulnerable individuals is an utmost priority. Beyond addressing abuse, the new leadership will face challenges in unifying a fractured Anglican community. Divisions over LGBTQ+ rights and the role of women clergy have strained relationships, particularly between liberal congregations in the West and more conservative members in regions like Africa. These disagreements have become defining issues, with many conservative voices feeling alienated by policies perceived as departures from tradition. For years, the Church of England has walked a tightrope, but it’s clear that patchwork solutions are no longer sustainable.

Reconciliation must be a top priority for the next archbishop, who will need to navigate these ideological divides with empathy and clarity. Additionally, the Church is contending with a rapid decline in membership and influence, especially in the UK. With church attendance dropping and religious affiliation waning, the incoming leader must confront the question of how to make the Church relevant to new generations. Rebuilding trust, especially after such a painful scandal, will require sincerity, transparency, and outreach that extends beyond traditional forms of ministry. This pivotal moment calls for fresh perspectives and perhaps even a re-evaluation of what it means to be a moral leader in the modern age. Rebuilding may take time, but with

resolute leadership, the Anglican Church can emerge stronger, more unified, and more responsive to the values of justice and protection that its followers expect and deserve.