

November 13, 2024 // The Rev. Ben Robertson

*Who is the Archbishop of Canterbury and why did he resign on Tuesday?*

Every Sunday we pray for the Archbishop of Canterbury, but you may not know who the Archbishop of Canterbury is and their role in the Church. Let's start with a little Church 101: All Saints is part of the Episcopal Church, a christian tradition mostly in the United States. The Episcopal Church is part of the Anglican Communion. The Anglican Communion is 85 million christians across the world, divided into thirty-nine Provinces, all of which were once part of the Church of England (anglican means, "related to the Church of England"). The thirty-nine Provinces include our Episocpal Church, the Church of Canada, the Church of Nigeria, etc. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion and based in London.

On Tuesday, 12 November, Justin Welby, the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury resigned. He resigned because he knew of a serial child abuser within the Church and failed to report him to the proper authorities. He said in a statement, "It is very clear that I must take personal and institutional responsibility ... I hope this decision makes clear how seriously the Church of England understands the need for change and our profound commitment to creating a safer church. As I step down I do so in sorrow with all victims and survivors of abuse." You can read more about the circumstances surrounding his resignation [here](#).

Abuse is wrong, a sin, and has no place in the Church. The Church should be a safe place where all are welcome, included, and valued, and no one is abused in any way. We require all clergy, lay leaders, staff (including our preschool staff), and volunteers be trained every three years in the awareness and prevention of misconduct against children, youth, and adults, including elders. I have reported suspected abuse in the past and would do so again if I believed someone was not safe. You can learn more about how the church safeguards against abuse [here](#) and if you have any further questions, please ask. And if you suspect someone is being abused, please inform me as soon as possible.

When we are baptized, we promise to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being." I am thankful for the ways the Church tries to keep this promise, and I mourn when the Church fails. I pray All Saints is a place where all are safe, and can abide in the peace and love of God.