

MEMORANDUM OF AFFIRMATION AND COMMITMENT

Between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe – Leuenberg Church Fellowship

Preamble

In 1995 and 2004 two consultations between the Anglican churches in Europe and churches belonging to the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) took place. Their aim was to consider what the declarations of Meissen, Porvoo and Reuilly might mean for the wider relations between Anglicans and Protestants in Europe. Since 2005 representatives of the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Church in Wales, the Church of Ireland and the Church of England have met three times with representatives of the CPCE to study the faith and order work on which they are engaged. These meetings have been helpfully facilitated by the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg. At the meeting of 13-15 April 2011 at Château Klingenthal, near Strasbourg, it was agreed that the Anglican and CPCE representatives would recommend to their sponsoring bodies that there should be a memorandum between the parties who have participated in the consultations.

The CPCE is based on the Leuenberg Agreement (LA) of 1973 which facilitated reconciliation and brought about "church fellowship" (ecclesial communion), including table and pulpit fellowship, between Protestant churches in Europe. Since it "is in the life of the churches and congregations that church fellowship becomes a reality", the more than 100 churches of CPCE committed themselves to "bear their witness and perform their service together" (LA 35).

The four British and Irish Anglican Churches are in communion with each other and are members of the worldwide Anglican Communion, linked together through the various Instruments of Communion. Representatives of the four churches have been meeting for an intra-Anglican faith and order consultation every few years.

For more than two decades, declarations of formal relationship have been made between Protestant churches belonging to the CPCE and Anglican churches. In the Meissen Declaration (1988), the EKD and the Church of England acknowledged each other as "churches belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God". They committed themselves "to share a common life and mission" and made certain forms of "eucharistic fellowship" possible. In a corresponding way, the Reuilly Declaration (1999) between the four Anglican Churches in Britain and Ireland and two Reformed and two Lutheran churches in France brought „a decisive step forward in the direction of visible unity" (Foreword, 18). In the British Isles, there are, among others, formal relationships between the Church of England and the Methodist Church of Great Britain (2003) and between the Scottish Episcopal Church, the United Reformed Church and the Methodist Church of Great Britain. The multilateral Welsh Covenant includes the Church in Wales and several Protestant churches. The

most far reaching agreement is the Porvoo Declaration (1992) in which the four Anglican Churches in Britain and Ireland have entered into ecclesial communion with Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches (four of them member churches of CPCE).

There is thus a nexus of overlapping ecumenical agreements and relationships of communion within which the developing conversation between the CPCE and the four Anglican churches is taking place.

Acknowledging the importance of this developing ecumenical context in a changing Europe and recognising the usefulness of the recent consultations the following agreement is proposed.

Confirmation

Both the Anglican churches and the CPCE are committed to the goal of the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ. According to the basic ecclesiological document of CPCE, "the **unity** of the church ... is rooted in the unity of its origin, i. e. in the unity of the triune God" and "has been given to ... the churches as the work of God. Thus the churches are faced with the task to witness in visible ways to this gift of God ...". The church fellowship realised in the "fullest possible co-operation in witness and service to the world" (LA 29) is seen as a witness to the visible unity.

The Anglican churches are committed to the goal of "full visible unity" in the form of "the sharing of one baptism, the celebrating of one eucharist and the service of a common ministry (including the exercise of a ministry of oversight, *episcopate*)" (Reuilly Common Statement, IV). The Anglican understanding of full visible unity is structured by the Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888/1920 which refers to the canonical Scriptures, the ecumenical creeds, the two dominical sacraments and "the historic episcopate locally adapted".

Thus the Anglican Churches the CPCE are one in the goal, but have different foci in defining the necessary elements of this goal. They have to continue working for a shared understanding enabling them to take further joint steps.

Commitments

As far as resources allow, the Church of England, the Church of Ireland, the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church, on the one hand, and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe – Leuenberg Church Fellowship, on the other hand will

- Exchange information and documentation on their emerging faith and order work;
- Continue to meet approximately every three years for a faith and order consultation;

- Explore together the theological exposition and concrete expression of the Church's mission, ministry and unity/communion;
- Invite each other to participate in major projects of theological research and reflection in the service of the Church's mission in Europe;
- Assist one another, wherever possible, in developing wider ecumenical relationships in Europe.

Signed

+ Amint Guildford

For the Church of England

+ Richard Meath and Kildare

For the Church of Ireland

+ David St Andrews

For the Scottish Episcopal Church

+ Jany Cambaensis

For the Church in Wales

For the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe

+ Ernst Friedrich Loh