

# The Anglican Communion Covenant: Questions and Answers

## 1. What is a covenant?

In the Bible, 'covenant' refers to a solemn agreement or promise which binds two parties together. However, is there more to be said about the character of 'covenant'? In his address to the Lambeth Conference in 2008, the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, Lord Sacks, reminded us that a covenant is a kind of relationship.<sup>1</sup> Two relationships which dominate many of our lives concern our employers and the government. These are about wealth (earning money, working) and power (the government's rule enforced through the law).

Rabbi Sacks suggested that a covenant is not about taking power or earning wealth. It is about sharing, based on promises and commitment. In particular, it is about sharing life, love and friendship. We usually find this kind of relationship in a family. With our husband, wife, children and parents, we share life, love and friendship. The same could be said of the family of our local church where we share the life, love and friendship of Jesus Christ with our Christian brothers and sisters. All these relationships are based on promises and commitments made in baptism, at confirmation, in marriage or at ordination. The Chief Rabbi talked about 'covenantal goods' in this way:

The state is about power. The market is about wealth. And there are two ways of getting people to do what we want them to do. One of them is to force them to do it – the way of power. The other one is to pay them to – the way of wealth.

But there is a third way, and to see exactly what makes the third way different from the other two I just want to do a little elementary arithmetic with you, because elementary arithmetic is about as much as I can do. Even my mobile phone gives me an inferiority complex, so higher mathematics is not my style, but here it is. Imagine, for a moment, you have total power, and then, in the fit of craziness you decide to share it with nine other people. How much power do you have left? You have 1/10 of what you began with. Supposing you have a thousand pounds, and you decide to share it with nine other people. How much do you have left? 1/10 of what you had when you began. But now supposing that you decide to share not power or wealth, but love, or friendship, or influence, or even knowledge and you decided to share those, with nine others. How much would you have left? Would you have less than when you began? No, you would have more. Why? Because love, friendship and influence are things that only exist by virtue of sharing them with others. And those are the goods I call covenantal goods – covenantal goods are the goods that, the more I share, the more I have. And that makes covenant different from wealth and power.

---

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Sacks, 'The Relationship between People and God', Lambeth Conference 28 July, 2008 available at: <http://www.lambethconference.org/daily/news.cfm/2008/7/29/ACNS4484>

We learn about covenants in the Bible. The Old Testament uses the word 'covenant' more than 250 times. In the first two books of the Bible, we learn about three particularly important covenants between God and the world. First, in Genesis 9, we have God's covenant with the whole of creation immediately after the flood.

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. (Genesis 9.8-13)

The second covenant we learn about is in Genesis 17 when God promises Abram that he will make of him a great nation which will become God's people:

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. (Genesis 17.1-4)

In Exodus chapters 19 to 24 we learn about God's covenant with the Israelites: they will be God's people for the world, living under the Law:

Then Moses went up to God; the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites.' (Exodus 19.1-6)

There are other covenants in the Bible, for example the promise of God to David and his royal dynasty in 2 Samuel 7.8-16.

A covenant is a promise which binds creation to God so that we might share God's life, love and friendship through good times and bad. For Christians, God's promise to his people is expressed most fully in the new covenant in Jesus Christ. We find this new covenant spoken of throughout the New Testament, particularly in St Paul's letters to the Corinthians and the letter to the

Hebrews. God binds us so closely to himself that God comes to dwell amongst us as one of us. It is through the new covenant in the person of Jesus that we share God's life, love and friendship.

As Christians, this is what we have received: a sharing in the life of God in Jesus Christ by the grace of the Holy Spirit. It is such a wonderful gift that we want to share it not only with those in our local church, but with our brothers and sisters all over the world. As God binds himself to us in the covenants of the Old Testament and the new covenant in Jesus Christ, so we want to bind ourselves to each other in his love as we share God's grace.

However, do covenants properly belong between God and people, rather than between peoples? Are covenants between peoples likely to fail because of our sin? In the Bible, we can find instances of covenants between peoples which are fruitful, while others fail. Our Christian faith, however, gives us a particular perspective on the nature of covenant and human relations. We believe that our relationship with God has been healed through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If God's covenant with us in Jesus heals our relationship with God, it also heals our relationships with each other. In the Lord's Prayer, for example, we pray 'forgive us our trespasses *as we forgive those who trespass against us.*' When we place our life under God's care, sin no longer divides. Any covenant between peoples, such as that proposed in the Anglican Communion, is therefore best understood as a participation in the saving covenant of God in Jesus Christ. Our covenant with each other in the Christian family is not something of our own making. It looks always to God's covenant in Christ as its source of power and grace. There is, then, only one true covenant: that which we receive in Christ as God binds us to himself. Our covenant is a sharing in this one saving grace of God.

Within the worldwide Christian community, we have long been members of the family known as the Anglican Communion. Our *Anglican Communion Covenant*, proposed for adoption, is an expression of the faith we have received and the faith we share through good times and bad within that family. Our Covenant uses words from the Bible and our Church tradition. It is an expression of our relationship as Anglicans: sharing the life, love and friendship of Jesus Christ around the world.

## **2. How and why has the Covenant been written?**

The Lambeth Commission on Communion was established in October 2003 by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the request of the Anglican Primates, in response to developments in North America with respect to same-sex relationships. The mandate requested consideration of ways in which communion and understanding could be enhanced where serious differences threatened the life of a diverse worldwide Church. In short, how does the Anglican Communion address relationships between its component parts in a true spirit of communion?

The Commission was chaired by the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, The Most Revd Robin Eames. The Commission delivered the *Windsor Report* in 2004, which recommended the adoption of an 'Anglican Covenant' to rebuild trust at a time of great strain on the Anglican Communion worldwide. For almost five centuries Anglicanism has tried to hold together diverse elements which, in other traditions, have failed to remain in unity. The Covenant can be seen as part of that process. The Covenant is not intended to be a detailed doctrinal

confession. Neither is the aim to change current Anglican structures or to amend doctrine. Rather, the Covenant aims to restate long-established Anglican teaching by affirming what the provinces of the Communion have in common, and, therefore, to build a foundation for a future where the Churches live together in mutual care and affection as one Communion. Love, charity and unity form the basis of the Covenant (John 13:34-35; 17:21). It is hoped that the Covenant will allow the Communion to order its common life to witness first and foremost to the biblical commands of charity and unity.

It should be mentioned that, while the issue of human sexuality brought tensions within the Communion into particular focus in 2003, other controversial issues have affected our common life in recent years. The Covenant is intended to express clearly the Communion's Christian life, and the process which must be undertaken when disputes arise.

This Covenant text has been arrived at only after a thorough process of consultation at every stage of its development. The first draft text of the Covenant was formulated by the Covenant Design Group (CDG), chaired by the Archbishop of the West Indies, The Most Revd Drexel Gomez. The Covenant went through three drafts and at each stage the text was sent to provinces for feedback and comment. The Primates' Meeting, the Lambeth Conference, and the Anglican Consultative Council all gave consideration to it; a Commentary by the bishops at Lambeth 2008 was particularly considered in the redrafting process. In December 2009 the final text of the *Anglican Communion Covenant* was agreed by the Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion. The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion has sent the Covenant to the Churches of the Communion to be considered for adoption through their particular formal processes. The timescales and legal processes vary considerably amongst the provinces of the Communion. The Provinces of Mexico, Myanmar and the West Indies have already adopted the Covenant. Provinces are to report progress to the meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in late 2012.

### **3. What does the *Anglican Communion Covenant* say?**

The Covenant has an introduction which discusses the Scriptural understanding of 'covenant' and 'communion'. Although not formally part of the Covenant, the Introduction 'shall always be annexed to the Covenant text' and 'accorded authority in understanding the purpose of the Covenant' (4.4.1). The Introduction states that 'We recognise the wonder, beauty and challenge of maintaining communion in this family of Churches, and the need for mutual commitment and discipline as a witness to God's promise in a world and time of instability, conflict, and fragmentation' (Intro, 4).

The Introduction begins by describing what we mean by 'communion'.

God has called us into communion in Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1.9). This communion has been "revealed to us" by the Son as being the very divine life of God the Trinity. What is the life revealed to us? St John makes it clear that the communion of life in the Church participates in the communion which is the divine life itself, the life of the Trinity. This life is not a reality remote from us, but one that has been "seen" and "testified to" by the apostles and their followers: "for in the communion of the Church we share in the divine

life”. This life of the One God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shapes and displays itself through the very existence and ordering of the Church. (Intro. 1).

This unity of the Church is expressed in the New Testament through the image of the Church as the body of Christ. As St Paul explains, the reality of the Church as the body of Christ means that we cannot say to another member of the body, ‘we have no need of you’. (1 Corinthians 12)

Following the Introduction, the Covenant is divided into four sections. The first three sections take the form of an affirmation of our shared faith followed by a series of commitments.

### *Section 1*

The first section is entitled ‘**Our Inheritance of Faith**’. It describes the nature of the Anglican Communion as part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. This section also looks to the two founts of our Communion: the sharing of Word and Sacrament. We are asked to commit ourselves ‘to teach and act in continuity and consonance with Scripture and the catholic apostolic faith, order and tradition.’ (1.2.2). There is a stress on the faithful, coherent and respectful interpretation of Scripture. Similarly, we are asked to commit ourselves to nurture and sustain Eucharistic communion.

### *Section 2*

The second section, entitled ‘**The Life We Share with Others: Our Anglican Vocation**’, is particularly concerned with the mission of the Churches of the Anglican Communion. This is a sharing in God’s mission in Christ “to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God” and to bring all to repentance and faith’ (2.2.2.a). This section also refers to our own ‘ongoing conversion’ as we deepen our life in Christ. The emphasis on mission in the Covenant is a helpful reminder of Christ’s Great Commission to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28.18-20). This part of the text also refers to ‘the five marks of mission’: To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom; to teach, baptise and nurture new believers; to respond to human need by loving service; to seek to transform unjust structures of society; to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

### *Section 3*

The third section is entitled ‘**Our Unity and Common Life**’. It asks the question, ‘what is the source of our unity?’ The immediate answer is ‘our participation in Baptism and Eucharist’ by which we are incorporated into the body of Christ, the Church. The gift of Christ in the Eucharist, and Baptism as the gateway to that Eucharistic life, is the crucial source of our unity as we receive ‘the Bread of Life’ and share Christ’s risen life. This section of the Covenant stresses the importance of bishops as guardians and teachers of the faith who are visible signs of unity, joining the local Church to the universal Church. The four ‘Instruments of Communion’ which facilitate our common life are also described: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates’ Meeting.

#### *Section 4*

The fourth section, entitled ‘**Our Covenanted Life Together**’, deals with practical matters. It describes how the Covenant may be adopted by a particular Church. It also deals with how the functioning of the Covenant will be overseen and what happens if a particular Church is deemed to have broken the Covenant. This process is described in the answer to question 7 below.

#### **4. How will the Covenant deepen our Communion?**

The Anglican Communion is more than a federation of churches. It is a ‘Communion’ with a shared *life*, not simply a shared set of beliefs. The *Anglican Communion Covenant* is not therefore only a doctrinal statement. It reminds us of the practice of Christian life in the form of certain virtues and disciplines (openness and patience; prayer, study and debate – section 3.2.3). We are also reminded of the need for mediated conversations in times of conflict (section 3.2.6). These aspects of our shared Christian life reflect the lives of the earliest Christians described in the book of Acts who ‘shared all things in common’ and ‘devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.’ (Acts 2.42, 44)

The Covenant will deepen our Communion by providing a constant reminder of our shared life and mutual responsibilities while renewing our commitment to the mission of the Church in the world. Nevertheless, just as in the early Church, disputes arise amongst Christians. This has particularly been the case within the Anglican Communion in recent years. The early Christians would meet together to discuss their disputes and, guided by the Holy Spirit, find a measure of peace and resolution as they journeyed together (Acts 15). In times of turmoil, the shared life of the early Christians described in the Bible had to be ordered and prayerful. In many of his letters, St Paul describes to his readers in various churches the way in which they are to behave towards each other in times of tension and conflict. The Anglican Communion Covenant seeks to provide an order to our Communion by describing how our disputes are to be dealt with, patiently, prayerfully and collectively, thereby deepening our shared life and mutual commitment. It does this at the prompting of Scripture and through faith in the guiding power of the Spirit.

#### **5. Is the Covenant Anglican?**

The tradition of ‘covenant theology’ is often associated with the Reformation and particularly those churches which are influenced in various ways by the Presbyterian tradition. The importance of the biblical notion of covenant for the Christians of the early Church has been re-emphasised by Anglican and Roman Catholic thinkers in recent decades. It would therefore be a mistake to associate covenant theology with any particular Church tradition or branch of Christianity.

As with any Christian understanding of covenant, the *Anglican Communion Covenant* finds its basis within Scripture’s witness to God’s covenant with creation. It also looks to the tradition of the Church as an authoritative source for our self-understanding. Within this wider context, the character of Anglicanism is made distinctive and clear particularly in the first three sections of the Covenant. It explores afresh those core aspects of Anglican identity, many of which we share with other churches. Other elements of Anglicanism make our Communion unique. For example, the Covenant refers to those founding documents of the Church of England from which the

Anglican Communion grew, as well as more recent expressions of Anglican identity such as the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral and the five Marks of Mission. The threefold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon is emphasised in section 3 with a particular focus on the ‘bishops in synod’ as teachers of the faith and visible symbols of unity (3.1.2 and 3.1.3). The distinctive Anglican understanding of authority and the autonomy of each Church within the Communion is stressed throughout the Covenant. One important characteristic of the Anglican Communion is that it has no central legislative and executive authority. Instead, Anglicans ‘are bound together “by mutual loyalty sustained through the common counsel of the bishops in conference” and of the other instruments of Communion’ (3.1.2). The Instruments of Communion are another unique aspect of Anglican identity and order. They are described in section 3.1.4 of the Covenant. You can find out a little more about the Instruments in the glossary at the end of this guide.

The *Anglican Communion Covenant* therefore finds its basis in Scripture and tradition and articulates the inheritance we share with other Christian churches and those aspects of our life which make our Communion distinctive.

## **6. Will all churches associated with the Anglican Communion adopt the Covenant?**

It is hoped that all the provinces of the Anglican Communion will adopt the Covenant. However, it is possible that some will not. It is important to recognize that if a province does not adopt the Covenant, this does not mean that it is no longer a part of the Anglican Communion. Likewise, if a particular church community affirms the Covenant and it is not currently part of the Anglican Communion, its affirmation of the Covenant does not automatically make it part of the Anglican Communion. There may be other Churches not currently in the Communion, or individual dioceses within existing provinces or local churches, which wish to affirm the Covenant, and which could be invited by the Instruments of Communion to adopt it formally. Currently, only those Churches which are members of the Anglican Communion (that is, those on the Schedule of Membership of the Anglican Consultative Council) are being invited to adopt the Covenant. The means by which Churches will adopt the Covenant will vary according to their respective procedures.

## **7. What will happen if the Covenant is broken?**

Section Four of the Covenant describes what happens if a Church is deemed to have broken the Covenant. The responsibility for monitoring the functioning of the Covenant belongs to the Standing Committee *on behalf of* the Instruments of Communion (see the Glossary at the end of this document).

When a question arises concerning fidelity to the Covenant, section 4 immediately calls the Churches of the Communion to the form of life described in section 3.2: to have regard for our common life; to spend time with openness and patience in matters of theological debate and reflection; to listen, pray and study with one another in order to discern the will of God; to seek a shared mind with other Churches, through the Communion’s councils, about matters of common concern; to act with diligence, care and caution in respect of any action which may provoke controversy; in situations of conflict, to participate in mediated conversations, which involve face to face meetings, agreed parameters and a willingness to see such processes through.

If agreement concerning a particular dispute is not reached, the matter is referred to the Standing Committee which may request a Church to defer a controversial action. If that request is ignored, the Standing Committee may *recommend* to any Instrument of Communion (for example, the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Primates' Meeting) the relational consequences of that action.

It is important to stress that there are already 'relational consequences' of certain decisions made by particular provinces of the Anglican Communion. Those consequences are frequently chaotic in nature. The Covenant provides a description of the form of life by which the Church has historically expressed its mission and a flexible structure for collectively recognising and facing shared tensions and difficulties. As the Archbishop of Canterbury has said:

The last bit of the Covenant text is the one that's perhaps been the most controversial, because that's where we spell out what happens if relationships fail or break down. It doesn't set out, as I've already said, a procedure for punishments and sanctions. It does try and sort out how we will discern the nature of our disagreement, how important is it? How divisive does it have to be? Is it a Communion breaking issue that's in question – or is it something we can learn to live with? And so in these sections of the Covenant what we're trying to do is simply to give a practical, sensible and Christian way of dealing with our conflicts, recognising that they're always going to be there.<sup>2</sup>

## **8. Will the Covenant prevent the Church from moving forward?**

The Church is continually prompted and led by the Holy Spirit in ways which we cannot anticipate or foresee. Rather than quench the Spirit, the Covenant will help us to discern the Spirit's leading more effectively *together*, as a Communion of Churches and a body of Christians. The earliest disciples of Jesus, as described by Luke in the book of Acts, had to work hard together, through shared worship and conversation in a spirit of mutual care, to discern the promptings of the Spirit which had been given to them at Pentecost. By using Scripture and our inheritance of faith, the Covenant describes this same form of life by which the Church has, down the ages, sought to discover the will of God.

Nothing in the Covenant describes how the life of a particular Anglican Church should proceed. Each local Church must be free to develop its life and mission within its particular context. However, the Covenant reminds us that it must do so while being mindful of other Anglican Christians around the world. The process of discerning the prompting of the Spirit and the future of the Church is therefore not only a local or regional matter; the Covenant reminds us that such discernment belongs to the whole Church, local and global.

By drawing us towards a more collective discernment of the Holy Spirit as members of a local and universal Church, the Covenant will help the Anglican Communion to discern more clearly and collectively the will of God as we move into God's future.

---

<sup>2</sup> Message, 17 December 2009; at <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/2687>.

## **9. Will the Covenant strengthen central control within the Anglican Communion?**

It is sometimes said that the Covenant will increase central control within the Anglican Communion. However, it must be stressed that the Covenant continually emphasises the autonomy of the provinces of the Communion. This helps to ensure that local and regional churches will not be swamped by any central power. Here are some examples of the way in which the Covenant expresses the importance of local and regional churches.

Each Church, with its bishops in synod, orders and regulates its own affairs and its local responsibility for mission through its own system of government and law and is therefore described as living “in communion with autonomy and accountability”. Trusting in the Holy Spirit, who calls and enables us to dwell in a shared life of common worship and prayer for one another, in mutual affection, commitment and service, we seek to affirm our common life through those Instruments of Communion by which our Churches are enabled to be conformed together to the mind of Christ. Churches of the Anglican Communion are bound together “not by a central legislative and executive authority, but by mutual loyalty sustained through the common counsel of the bishops in conference” and of the other instruments of Communion. (3.1.2)

Such mutual commitment does not represent submission to any external ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Nothing in this Covenant of itself shall be deemed to alter any provision of the Constitution and Canons of any Church of the Communion, or to limit its autonomy of governance. The Covenant does not grant to any one Church or any agency of the Communion control or direction over any Church of the Anglican Communion. (4.1.3)

Although the Covenant does not in any way suggest the creation of a centralised authoritarian structure, it does affirm the importance of our interdependence and mutual responsibility. A common life means that each Church of the Communion should be mindful that its life and decisions impact positively and negatively on the lives of other Churches. Therefore, the Covenant commits us ‘to have regard for the common good of the Communion in the exercise of autonomy’ while ‘upholding our mutual responsibility and interdependence.’ (3.2.2)

## **10. Why might people be nervous about the Covenant?**

Although the Covenant is part of a long history of our need to understand the diversity and growth of the Anglican Communion while maintaining its unity, it does represent a new venture and another stage in the life of our Churches. Anything new of this kind brings with it a certain degree of anxiety concerning future developments. However, we can be confident that the Covenant is the result of a careful process of consultation, debate and prayer.

Some are concerned that the Covenant makes new and considerable demands on the Instruments of Communion. Much may depend on how the Covenant is received and used. Others suggest that the Covenant will make tensions and divisions within the Communion even more visible. At present, the Anglican Communion has no way of collectively identifying which disputes might potentially lead to the fracture of our Christian body, and which are less damaging and divisive. If we are to enhance the unity of the Communion and work towards the healing of the Church,

we need a way of identifying which are the really serious problems. We also need a description of how we are going to set about dealing with those problems. The Covenant tries to do just that. The Covenant describes and clarifies the nature of our mutual commitments and the form of life required to begin the process of discernment towards deeper communion and a more intense participation in the life of God made known in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Glossary of Terms

### The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral

The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral is a four-point expression of Anglican identity passed by the House of Bishops of the American Episcopal Church in 1886 and, in slightly amended form, at the third Lambeth Conference in 1888. It was written at a time of rapid expansion for the Anglican Churches and it has been a highly influential expression of Anglican identity. It reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this Conference, the following Articles supply a basis on which approach may be by God's blessing made towards Home Reunion:

- (a) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith
- (b) The Apostles' Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith
- (c) The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself — Baptism and the Supper of the Lord — ministered with unfailing use of Christ's Words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him
- (d) The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church.

The Covenant uses the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral at sections 1.1.3-1.1.6.

### Instruments of Communion

The Instruments of Communion are the four bodies in which all Anglican Churches participate. They work to mediate and promote Communion and unity between Anglican Churches. They are:

***The Archbishop of Canterbury*** who functions as the spiritual head of the Communion. He is the focus of unity. He is the bishop of the See of Canterbury with which Anglicans have historically been in communion

***The Lambeth Conference*** (first held in 1867) is the oldest international Anglican consultation. It is a forum for bishops of the Communion to express unity and collegiality through manifesting the episcopate, to discuss matters of mutual concern, and to pass resolutions intended to act as guideposts. It is held roughly every ten years. The Lambeth Conference last met in 2008.

***The Anglican Consultative Council*** (first met in 1971) was created by a resolution of the 1968 Lambeth Conference. It meets usually every three years. It will next meet in 2012. The Council consists of representative Bishops, clergy, and laity chosen by the provinces of the Communion.

***The Primates' Meeting*** (first met in 1979) is the most recent manifestation of international consultation and deliberation. It is a meeting of all the Primates, Presiding Bishops and Moderators of the Anglican Communion. A primate is the senior bishop in a province.

### **The Standing Committee**

This is an elected body of fourteen members. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the President. The members of the Standing Committee are elected by the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting. They are drawn from provinces from all over the Anglican Communion. The Standing Committee will oversee the working of the Covenant on behalf of the Instruments of Communion and make recommendations to the Instruments.

### **The five Marks of Mission**

The five Marks of Mission were developed by the Anglican Consultative Council between 1984 and 1990. They have since become widely discussed and accepted within the Anglican Communion as an expression of our Churches' mission in the world. The five Marks of Mission are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth