

Cape Town, South Africa 1-7 December 2001



The Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (IASCER) met in Cape Town, South Africa, from 1 to 7 December. The Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell served as co-ordinating chairman in the unavoidable absence of both the chairman and vice-chairman of the Commission. The Rt Revd John Baycroft was invited as a special consultant on Roman Catholic relations. The Revd Jonathan Gough, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Officer for Ecumenism, and the Rt Revd Christopher

Epting, the Ecumenical Officer of the Episcopal Church of the USA were welcomed to their first meeting of the Commission.

IASCER continued its programme of reviewing and discussing all the present international dialogues involving Anglicans, and received further information on several provincial and regional initiatives towards unity with other Christians. Interim reports were received from the working groups established to study in detail issues of "Communion with and within the Anglican Communion" and Holy Order, both of which raise important considerations for the Anglican Communion's ecumenical relations. The Commission discussed the complementary nature of its work with that of the Inter Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, and the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation.

IASCER welcomed the establishment of a new Commission for dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, and approved a proposal for a preparatory phase of an International Working Group with the World Methodist Council. The Commission nominated participants for Communion initiatives regarding Continuing Churches and other forthcoming meetings and working groups.

Detailed comments and questions were formulated for sharing with several provinces regarding their ecumenical initiatives. The Commission expressed particular concern where parties to ecumenical agreements subsequently take unilateral action which appears to be contrary to what has been agreed.



On Advent Sunday, the members attended the Holy Eucharist at St Mary Magdelene's Church in Guguletu and were hosted to lunch by the vicar the Revd Canon Mxolisi Mpambani and members of the parish. The Commission was received by Archbishop of Cape Town, the Most Revd Njongonkulu Ndungane, and enjoyed the hospitality of Bishopscourt and conversation with His Grace. Presiding Bishop Siggibo Dwane of the

Ethiopian Episcopal Church paid a brief visit to the Commission which enabled some exchange of information on the life and history of that Church. Morning and Evening Prayer were celebrated daily according to the liturgy of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa and members were able to attend the daily Eucharist in St George's Cathedral. The Commission is grateful to the Revd Canon Luke Pato, our local host, for

the warm welcome to Cape Town and for ensuring the smooth operation of the Commission.

The Commission consists of members representing each international dialogue involving Anglicans, including the multilateral dialogue of Faith and Order, along with consultants who bring particular regional or theological expertise. Present at Cape Town were: the Revd Prebendary Dr Paul Avis, the Revd Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, the Rt Revd John Baycroft the Revd Dr William Crockett, the Rt Revd Christopher Epting, the Rt Revd Dr John W. Gladstone, the Revd Jonathan Gough, the Revd Canon David Hamid (secretary), the Revd Sarah Rowland Jones, the Very Revd Justus Marcus, the Revd Canon Luke Pato, and the Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell. Mrs Christine Codner and Mr Matthew Davies of the Anglican Communion Office served as administrative assistants to the meeting.

The next plenary of IASCER is scheduled for 30 November - 6 December 2002 in the Diocese of Europe.