

The Anglican Communion Covenant: what the churches have done so far

This paper contains three kinds of information.

The first (Category A) is from member churches which have taken action in their governing body with respect to the Covenant, and which have communicated their decision to the Anglican Communion Office. The second (Category B) is from member churches which have taken action along the way to a decision, but which have not yet made a formal decision. The third (Category C) is from member churches whose actions have not been communicated to the ACO, but about which there is information through the media or on their own websites.

Wherever possible the exact wording of resolutions as adopted or defeated is given.

The Director for Unity Faith and Order, Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, has compiled this information and has tried to be as accurate as possible. Member churches are urged to contact her at the Anglican Communion Office if the information about them is incorrect.

The Churches in Category A (decision taken) chose as follows (in chronological order):

Mexico – accepted and subscribed
Myanmar - adopted
West Indies – adopted
South East Asia - adopted, together with its own preamble
Ireland – subscribed
Papua New Guinea – adopted
Southern Cone – approved
Aotearoa/New Zealand Polynesia – subscribed sections 1-3, unable to adopt section 4
Scottish Episcopal Church – defeated a resolution to adopt

The Churches in Category B (partial decisions taken) (in alphabetical order)

Australia – sent to dioceses for study
Canada – sent to dioceses and parishes for study; advice being sought ‘on the theological, ecclesiological, legal, and constitutional implications of a decision to adopt or not to adopt the Covenant’
England – sent to dioceses; failed to obtain a majority of dioceses in favour; being reported to General Synod in November 2012; possible consideration of ‘following motions’
Korea - acknowledges that Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the Covenant as currently drafted are excellent and useful theological statements for the Anglican understanding of church, communion and tradition, and postpones the final decision on the adoption of the covenant for further consideration of section 4.
Melanesia – ‘had no difficulty accepting sections 1-3 but deferred consideration about adoption to the next General Synod (2014)
Southern Africa – adopted subject to a ratification vote
The Episcopal Church – declined to take a position at its 2012 General Convention
Wales – expressed its readiness to engage with any ongoing process of consideration of the Covenant, and requested clarification from the 15th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council as to the status and direction of the Covenant process in the light of the position of the Church of England

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia Category A

The General Synod/Te Hinota Whānui of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia meeting in July 2012 unanimously adopted the following resolution.

Whereas in 2010 the General Synod/te Hīnota Whānui approved the provisions of Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the proposed Anglican Covenant in principle, and referred the whole of the proposed Covenant to the Episcopal Units of this church for consideration and reporting to the 2012 Session of the Synod,

And whereas Te Runanganui o Te Pīhopatanga o Aotearoa, and the Diocese of Polynesia, and four of the Diocese in New Zealand, Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and Waiapu, have rejected the proposed Covenant,

And whereas some of those bodies responding to the Resolution of 2010 have suggested that this church should, if it rejects the proposed Covenant, nonetheless commit itself to using procedures similar to those set out in Section 3 of the proposed Covenant, if another church in the Communion should raise concerns about actions or proposed actions of this church, and should seek an affirmation from the Anglican Consultative Council that churches which do not adopt the proposed Covenant remain full members of the Anglican Communion,

Now therefore, it be resolved that this Church:

- 1 Is unable to adopt the proposed Anglican Covenant due to concerns about aspects of Section 4, but subscribes to Sections 1, 2, and 3 as currently drafted as a useful starting point for consideration of our Anglican understanding of the church.
- 2 Affirms the commitment of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia to the life of the Anglican Communion including the roles and responsibilities of the four Instruments of Communion as they currently operate.
- 3 Asks the General Secretary to inform the Secretary General of the Communion of the passing of Clauses 1 and 2 of this resolution.
- 4 Asks its representatives to the Anglican Consultative Council to bring a Motion to that body at its 2012 meeting affirming that those churches of the Communion which are unable to adopt the proposed Covenant remain full members of the Communion.
- 5 Commits itself, if another church in the Anglican Communion raises concerns with it regarding actions it takes or proposes to take, to utilising procedures similar to those set out in Section 3 of the proposed Covenant, in an attempt to resolve that issue.
- 6 Asks the Judicial Committee to include Clause 5 of this resolution in the schedule of resolutions of the 2012 Session of the General Synod/te Hīnota Whānui which it recommends should be made Standing Resolutions by the 2014 Session of the Synod.

The Anglican Church of Australia Category B

In September 2010, the General Synod resolved to:

- receive the final text of the Anglican Communion Covenant as an expression of our aspirations for the life of the Anglican Communion;
- commend it for further study, dialogue and deliberation in the Dioceses;
- request the Synods of all dioceses to consider the question of the Anglican Church of Australia adopting the Covenant by resolution and report to the Standing Committee by December 2012; and
- request the Standing Committee to produce a report for consideration at the Sixteenth Session of General Synod. (Resolution 71/10)

The Church of Bangladesh

Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil

The Anglican Church of Burundi

The Anglican Church of Canada Category B

Resolution adopted by the General Synod June 2010:

1. receive the final text of *The Covenant for the Anglican Communion*;
2. request that materials be prepared under the auspices of the Anglican Communion Working Group, for parishes and dioceses in order that study and consultation be undertaken on *The Covenant for the Anglican Communion*;
3. request that conversations, both within the Anglican Church of Canada and across the Communion, reflect the values of openness, transparency, generosity of spirit, and integrity, which have been requested repeatedly in the context of the discussion of controversial matters within the Communion;
4. request that the proposed Covenant be referred to the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee and to the Governance Working Group in order to support these conversations by providing advice on the theological, ecclesiological, legal, and constitutional implications of a decision to adopt or not to adopt the Covenant;
5. direct the Council of General Synod, after this period of consultation and study, to bring a recommendation regarding adoption of *The Covenant for the Anglican Communion* to the General Synod of 2013.

The Church of the Province of Central Africa

Iglesia Anglicana de la Region Central de America

Province de L'Eglise Anglicane Du Congo

The Church of England Category B

General Synod in November 2010 voted to ‘consider’ the following resolution.

WHEREAS:

(1) It is intended that the Church of England should enter into and adopt the Anglican Communion Covenant and that effect should be given to that intention by resolution of the General Synod of the Church of England; and

(2) It is desired to give formal publication to the same as the embodiment of the will of the Church of England as expressed by the whole body of the Synod by its affirmation and proclamation as an Act of Synod

IT IS RESOLVED by the Archbishops, Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the General Synod of the Church of England, assembled in their Synod at [Westminster], as follows—

1. The Church of England hereby enters into and adopts the Anglican Communion Covenant as set out in Annex 1 to GS Misc 966 and solemnly covenants with the other Churches which enter into and adopt it in making the affirmations and commitments that it contains.

2. This resolution shall come into force upon being affirmed and proclaimed an Act of Synod and ratified and confirmed for their respective provinces by each of the Presidents of the General Synod.

The resolution, according to the Church of England’s canonical requirements, was then considered by diocesan synods. A majority of diocesan synods decided against. A report of these decisions will be made to the meeting of the General Synod in November 2012 and as it is a public document excerpts from it are appended to this paper as Appendix A.

According to the General Synod procedures, no resolution not accepted by dioceses can be addressed again within the 5 year life of that particular Synod, which would mean 2015. Some dioceses have adopted ‘following motions’ related to the Covenant and the Business Committee of General Synod will decide how and when they are to be addressed. These are also in Appendix A.

Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui

The General Synod will make a decision in 2013.

The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean

The Church of Ireland: Category A

From a letter from the Primate to the Secretary General of the ACC in May 2011:

‘The General Synod of the Church of Ireland meeting today in Armagh voted in favour of the following Motion on the Anglican Covenant:

‘Seeing that the Anglican Covenant is consonant with the doctrines and formularies of the Church of Ireland, the General Synod hereby subscribes the Covenant.’

The Nippon Sei Ko Kai (The Anglican Communion in Japan)

The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & The Middle East

The Anglican Church of Kenya

The Anglican Church of Korea Category B

The Primate wrote to the Secretary General of the ACC on October 19, 2012 reporting that the following resolution was adopted:

In the 25th Provincial Synod of ACK, which was held on June 12, 2012, it be resolved that the ACK

1. acknowledges that Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the Covenant as currently drafted are excellent and useful theological statements for the Anglican understanding of church, communion and tradition.
2. postpones the final decision on the adoption of the covenant, in consideration, first of all, of the need for the sufficient understanding about the content, process and result of the covenant which is not yet achieved within the province; and, secondly, in consideration of the need for further discernment regarding the divided opinions about aspects of Section 4 of the Covenant within the province and among provinces of communion.
3. asks the continued process of explanation and examination of the Covenant, including the introduction about other provinces' understandings and positions related to the Covenant to the churches and peoples of the province.

The Church of the Province of Melanesia Category B

From a letter from the Primate to the Secretary General of the ACC, December 2011:

'The General Synod met in November 2011. It did not have any difficulty in accepting Sections One, Two and Three but there was a lot of discussion on Section Four.

'In the end a motion was moved: "That this 13th General Synod recognises the significance of the Anglican Communion Covenant, but defers making any specific decision on the adoption or otherwise of the Covenant until the next General Synod in 2014."

'The idea is to allow the Diocesan Synods to thoroughly discuss the Covenant before taking it back to the General Synod in 2014.'

La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico Category A

The Provincial Secretary wrote to the Secretary General on June 21, 2010, reporting that 'the VI General Synod of the Anglican Church of Mexico, held in Mexico City, on June 11-12 approved the following official action[s]:

To accept and subscribe the Anglican Communion Covenant.'

Resolution:

Considerando que: la versión final de El Pacto de la Comunión Anglicana ha sido ya distribuida a todas las Provincias, para su discusión y eventual aprobación y suscripción en sus instancias máximas de autoridad, y

Considerando que: el Pacto reafirma el entendimiento anglicano de la fe Cristiana, tal como nuestra Provincia lo ha recibido, lo proclama y lo vive, y

Considerando que: la finalidad del Pacto es mantener la unidad y propiciar la reconciliación entre las varias Provincias de la Comunión Anglicana, especialmente entre aquellas que ya se encuentran en una situación de ruptura de la Comunión Sacramental, y

Considerando que: las Provincias que lo suscriban, se comprometen a no actuar en forma unilateral en asuntos controversiales y potencialmente divisivos para la Comunión Anglicana, y

Considerando que: la unidad de la Comunión Anglicana es una de nuestras principales prioridades como Provincia,

Resuélvase que: este VI Synodo General de la Iglesia Anglicana de México, acepta y suscribe el Pacto de la Comunión Anglicana, en un espíritu de esperanza y oración.

The Church of the Province of Myanmar (Burma): Category A

From letter from the Primate to the Secretary General of the ACC: 'I would like to officially inform you that The Church of the Province of Myanmar decided to accept, adopt and sign 'The Anglican Communion Covenant' in its Provincial Standing Committee meeting of November 2010 after long and careful discussions on it.'

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)

The Church of North India (United) Category C

The Director for Unity Faith and Order has heard orally both from the Provincial Secretary and from the member of IASCUFO from this church that it has adopted the Covenant. This has not been confirmed.

The Church of Pakistan (United)

The church will be considering the Covenant early in 2013.

The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea Category A

From a letter from Rt Revd Peter Ramsden, Bishop of Port Moresby, on behalf of the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of PNG, to the Secretary General, December 1, 2011:

'The 2011 meeting of the Provincial Council of the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea unanimously approved and accepted the Anglican Covenant. On behalf of the House of Bishops, who met in Popondetta last week, I am writing to you in order to notify the Anglican Consultative Council of this decision.

'Our decision is based on our understanding of the name "Anglican Communion", the name by which we are known to the world.

"Anglican" was one of the styles of Christianity brought to this land and people near the end of the nineteenth century. It never pretended to be the only form of Christianity, but it did reflect how one part of the Christian family had developed, built on the importance of scripture, creeds, sacraments and episcopal order. Today we try to combine our Anglo-Catholic theological heritage and personal discipleship to the Lord Jesus in the way we witness to the five marks of mission with our ecumenical partners in PNG and our Anglican partners overseas.

"Communion", in our understanding, describes a particular kind of close relationship which both ensures autonomy and requires responsibility. It is an expression of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and as such is a precious gift to God's people. It clearly requires mutual respect, open communication and patience in dealing with issues that threaten it. In recent decades we have been saddened by the apparent lack of these things in the controversies concerning the ordination of women and issues of human sexuality.

'We also feel it important to remember that there is a greater unity to pray for than simply within Anglicanism. Anglicans are only part of the wider Christian "communion" that is the Church of God, which must have an important role in discerning the truth. Anglicans, we believe, have been called to live a particular style of Christian witness which, because it is less juridical and confessional than that of some others, clearly requires a high level of mutual concern and respect.

'Meanwhile, Anglicans in Papua New Guinea are proud to belong to the Anglican Communion. As bishops we attended the 2008 Lambeth Conference, supported the three moratoria, endorsed the covenant process and value the efforts of the Archbishop of Canterbury to promote our unity. The Covenant might not have been proposed if some Anglican Provinces had not acted in the way they did, but recent history has produced it and we believe it deserves our support as a contribution to shaping and strengthening a future Anglican Communion, faithful to our calling to be "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4.3). ...'

The Episcopal Church in the Philippines Category C

A newsletter 'Philippine Episcopalian' reports from a speech by the Prime Bishop that the Council of Bishops rejected the Covenant. The ACO is seeking clarification.

L'Eglise Episcopale au Rwanda

The Scottish Episcopal Church Category A

The Provincial Secretary General wrote to the Secretary General of the ACC on July 6, 2012.

'The following motion was defeated by the General Synod in July 2012 (6 in favour, 112 against and 13 abstentions):

“That this Synod agree in principle to adopt the Anglican Covenant and instruct the Faith and Order Board to arrange to bring forward appropriate canonical provision for consideration for first reading at General Synod 2013.”

'The following motion was passed *nem con* with only one abstention

“That this Synod

- Give thanks for the part played by the Scottish Episcopal Church in the early stages of the evolution of the Anglican Communion through the consecration of Samuel Seabury in Aberdeen;
- Affirm its desire to continue to be part of the Anglican Communion as it seeks closer union while celebrating its diversity;
- Call on the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primates' Meeting, the Lambeth Conference and the Anglican Consultative Council to encourage the development of bonds of shared mission, respect and mutual support through which the Anglican Communion can help spread the love of Christ across the world;
- Affirm the work of the Anglican Communion Networks, bodies and initiatives through which those bonds can be nurtured.”

Church of the Province of South East Asia Category A

The Anglican Province of South East Asia has acceded to the Anglican Covenant. A 3,200-word “Preamble to the Letter of Accession” begins with these paragraphs:

For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. (2 Corinthians 13: 8)

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4: 3-6)

1. This Preamble gives an account of the decisions that led to the drawing up of the Anglican Communion Covenant. It also outlines the *raison d'être* for the Church of the Province of South East Asia's agreement to sign the Anglican Communion Covenant. The historical events of the past decade which caused the “torn fabric of the communion” set the context in which the Province and the constituent Dioceses see the need for this process. It follows that this Preamble also expresses our expectations that the background which has given rise to the need for this are recognized by the Churches of the Anglican Communion and provides the milieu in which it is signed.

2. In her December 2009 Meeting, the Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion approved the [final text](#) of the Anglican Communion Covenant for distribution to the Provinces of the Anglican Communion. The Provinces were asked to formally consider the Anglican Communion Covenant for adoption through appropriate processes. In the words of the Anglican Communion Covenant:

The Covenant operates to express the common commitments and mutual accountability which hold each Church in the relationship of communion one with another. Recognition of, and fidelity to, this Covenant, enables mutual recognition and communion. Participation in the Covenant implies a recognition by each Church of those elements which must be maintained in its own life and for which it is accountable to the Churches with which it is in Communion in order to sustain the relationship expressed in this Covenant. (4.2.1)

3. These words bear strong resemblance to the closing appeal in the Second South-to-South Encounter Kuala Lumpur Statement in 1997, where the need for accountability was also noted:

We further challenge our Anglican Churches to ... guard the internal unity of our Communion. We therefore call on the Primates, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Lambeth Conference to take the necessary steps to establish such new structures (or reinforce old ones) that will strengthen the bonds of affection between our provinces, and especially, make for effective mutual accountability in all matters of doctrine and polity throughout the Communion. (7.2, 3)

4. The similarities are not accidental. For the Anglican Communion Covenant is the culmination of a decade of intense disputes over ethical teaching and church order in the Communion. The Kuala Lumpur Statement, in fact, marked the beginning of a united stand, spearheaded by churches in the southern continents, for the faith that was once delivered to the saints across the Communion.

The Church of South India (United)

Anglican Church of Southern Africa Category B

Resolution adopted by the Provincial Synod: 'This Synod

1. noting that
 - 1.1 The Synod of Bishops meeting in September 2009 agreed that Provincial Standing Committee be asked to support the Covenant, and that a resolution be brought to that body to that effect;
 - 1.2 PSC passed a resolution at its September meeting, that 'This PSC agrees in principle to support the adoption by ACSA of the Anglican Covenant subject to ratification by the provincial Synod of 2010'
2. Resolves that ACSA adopt the Anglican Covenant as approved by the Bishops; and
3. Requests that it be ratified at the next sitting of Provincial Synod.'

Iglesia Anglicana del Cono Sur de America Category A

From a press release sent to the Secretary General in December 2011:

'At its recent November (3 to 11) meeting in Asunción, Paraguay, the Executive Committee of the Province of the Southern Cone of America, together with its Bishops, voted to approve the Anglican Covenant. The Province views the covenant as a way forward given the difficult circumstance of watching certain Provinces of the Anglican Communion propose novel ways of Christian living in rejection of Biblical norms.

'In response to these novel practices the Southern Cone had held churches in North America under its wing for some time while the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA) was formed. However, the Province has not maintained jurisdiction over any local churches there for over a year. As a result, all so called 'border crossings' by any provincial members ceased (as of October, 2010) even though the Southern Cone still remains in impaired communion with US and Canadian Provinces. It is hoped that the Covenant can now provide Communion stability.

'One of the Bishops commented, "We believe that life in the Communion must be maintained by a basic level of accountability if, in fact, we are a family of interdependent churches. The Covenant helps fulfill this role. Naturally, house rules should be kept to a minimum. But being a member of a family has responsibilities that must be 'lived into'. Right now, a small faction in the Communion continues to do 'its own thing' enjoying many privileges and few responsibilities of family." Inquiries: Bishop Frank Lyons, Bolivia'

The Episcopal Church of the Sudan

The Anglican Church of Tanzania

The Church of the Province of Uganda

The Episcopal Church

General Convention in July 2012 concurred with the following resolutions:

B005

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 77th General Convention express its gratitude to those who so faithfully worked at producing and responding to the proposed Anglican Covenant (www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/final/text.cfm); and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention acknowledge that following extensive study and prayerful consideration of the Anglican Covenant there remain a wide variety of opinions and ecclesiological positions in The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, that as a pastoral response to The Episcopal Church, the General Convention decline to take a position on the Anglican Covenant at this convention; and be it further

Resolved, that the General Convention ask the Presiding Officers to appoint a task force of Executive Council (Blue Book, 637) to continue to monitor the ongoing developments with respect to the Anglican Covenant and how this church might continue its participation; and be it further

Resolved, that the Executive Council task force on the Anglican Covenant report its findings and recommendations to the 78th General Convention.

D008

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring that The 77th General Convention express its profound gratitude to those who so faithfully work at encouraging dialogue within the diversity of the Anglican Communion, and be it further

Resolved, That we celebrate the great blessing of the Anglican Communion in its diversity within community as autonomous churches in relationship bound together in our differences in service to God's mission, and be it further

Resolved, That we hold fast and reaffirm our historic commitment to and constituent membership in the Anglican Communion as expressed in the Preamble of the Constitution of The Episcopal Church, and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church maintain and reinforce strong links across the world-wide Anglican Communion committing itself to continued participation in the wider councils of the Anglican Communion, and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church deepen its involvement with Communion ministries and networks using where applicable the Continuing Indaba process: conversations across differences to strengthen relationships in God's mission (<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/continuingindaba> and www.continuingindaba.com); and be it further

Resolved, That The 77th General Convention encourage dioceses, congregations and individual members of The Episcopal Church to educate themselves about the Communion as well as promote and support the Anglican Communion and its work.

The Church in Wales Category B

The Governing Body met in April 2012 and adopted the following resolution unanimously. That the Governing Body:

- (i) affirm the commitment of the Church in Wales to the life of the Anglican Communion;
- (ii) affirm its readiness to engage with any ongoing process of consideration of the Anglican Communion Covenant;
- (iii) request clarification from the 15th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council as to the status and direction of the Covenant process in the light of the position of the Church of England;
- (iv) urge upon the Instruments of Communion a course of action which continues to seek reconciliation and the preservation of the Communion as a family of interdependent but autonomous Churches.

The Church of the Province of West Africa

The Church in the Province of the West Indies Category A

The Provincial Secretary wrote to the Secretary General on January 14, 2011:

‘Please be informed that The Provincial Synod of the Church in the Province of the West Indies at its meeting held in the Diocese of Guyana from 9th -12th December 2009, agreed in principle to the adoption of the proposed Anglican Covenant and requested the Provincial Standing Committee to review the final draft when circulated by the Anglican Communion Office.

‘The Provincial Standing Committee, at its meeting in March 2010, considered the final draft of the proposed Anglican Covenant and agreed, by unanimous consent to adopt, on behalf of the Province, the Anglican Covenant.

‘The Province of the West Indies holds the view that the Covenant embodies the spirit of Anglicanism and should therefore serve as an appropriate mechanism for the fostering of interdependence in mission among the member churches of the Anglican Communion without diminishing our autonomy in communion.’

Appendix A

(from the Business Committee of the Church of England; the relevant parts of the report is reproduced here; the full report is available at <http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1477814/gs1878anglicancommunioncovenantreportbythebusinesscommittee.pdf>)

GENERAL SYNOD
THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION COVENANT: DRAFT ACT OF SYNOD
REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE ON THE REFERENCE TO THE DIOCESES

Introduction

1. Article 8 of the General Synod's Constitution states that 'a scheme for a constitutional union or a permanent and substantial change of relationship between the Church of England and another Christian body, being a body a substantial number of whose members reside in Great Britain' shall not be finally approved by the General Synod unless, at a stage determined by the Archbishops, the scheme, or the substance of the proposals embodied therein, has been approved by the majority of the dioceses at meetings of their diocesan synods (or, in the case of the Diocese in Europe, of the bishop's council and standing committee of that diocese). This requirement was held to apply to the draft Act of Synod adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant on the basis that it provided for a permanent and substantial change in the relationships between the Church of England and the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church respectively.

2. In December 2010 the draft Act of Synod adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant was referred to the dioceses under cover of GS Misc 971.

Voting on the draft legislation

3. Diocesan synods were asked to consider and vote on this motion (without amendment and as a single motion):

'That this Synod approve the draft Act of Synod adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant.'

4. The results of the voting in the diocesan synods and in the bishop's council and standing committee of the Diocese in Europe are set out in [a table available on request].

5. Under Rule 34(1)(h) of the Church Representation Rules, if the votes of the houses of clergy and laity of a diocesan synod are in favour of a matter referred under the provisions of Article 8, the matter shall be deemed to have been approved for the purposes of that Article. (Similar provision is made in relation to the bishop's council and standing committee of the Diocese in Europe by s.3(2) Diocese in Europe Measure 1980.)

It should also be noted that, for a motion to be carried in any house, the majority of those present and voting must have voted in favour. (An abstention from voting is not a vote, and if the numbers voting for and against a motion are equal, a majority has not voted in favour.)

6. The draft Act of Synod was approved in eighteen dioceses and not approved in twenty-six dioceses. *Thus the draft Act of Synod was not approved by a majority of the dioceses and it therefore cannot be presented to the General Synod for Final Approval.* For the record, there is nothing in the Synod's Constitution or Standing Orders that would preclude the process being started over again, whether in the lifetime of this Synod or subsequently, by another draft Instrument to the same effect being brought forward for consideration by the General Synod before being referred to the dioceses under Article 8. The Business Committee is not, however, aware of a proposal to re-start the process in this way.

11. Overall, of the 1516 members of houses of clergy who voted, 732 (48%) voted in favour and 784 (52%) voted against. Of the 1813 members of houses of laity who voted, 960 (53%) voted in favour and 853 (47%) voted against.

Following Motions

14. GS Misc 971 recognized that it would be open to diocesan synods to consider motions arising out of the draft Act of Synod, in addition to the motion required to indicate whether they approved it; a number did so. The motions considered by the diocesan synods, and the voting upon them, as reported to the Clerk to the Synod, are set out in **Annex B**.

On behalf of the Committee
JULIAN HENDERSON
Chair 25 May 2012

Annex B

FOLLOWING MOTIONS

I: Diocesan Synod Motions

1. A motion for debate by the General Synod was considered in thirteen dioceses. In eleven, it was moved in the following form:

'That this Synod:

`(a) rejoice in the fellowship of the world-wide Anglican Communion, which is rooted in our shared worship and held together by bonds of affection and our common appeal to Scripture, tradition and reason;

`(b) thank the Archbishop of Canterbury for his tireless efforts throughout the Communion to sustain and strengthen unity in difficult times; and

`(c) call on the House of Bishops:

``(i) to find ways to maintain and reinforce strong links across the world-wide Anglican Communion and to deepen the Church of England's involvement with the existing Communion ministries and networks (especially the continuing Indaba process);

``(ii) to publicise and promote this work within the dioceses of the Church of England in order to broaden understanding of, and enthusiasm for, the Anglican Communion; and

``(iii) to encourage a wide understanding of, and support for, the next Lambeth Conference.'

2. It was carried in this form by the Diocesan Synods of nine dioceses: Bath and Wells, Chelmsford, Lincoln, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Oxford, St Albans and Worcester.

3. The motion was also carried in the Diocese of Southwark, with the addition at the end of paragraph (a) of the following words: ‘all as set out in Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the draft Anglican Communion Covenant’.

4. The motion was also carried in the Diocese of Guildford with the words ‘especially the continuing Indaba process’ in paragraph (c) (i) deleted.

5. The motion was lost in the Chichester and Exeter diocesan synods.

II: Motion passed by the Ely Diocesan Synod

7. The following resolution was passed by the Ely diocesan synod (by majority vote, with one abstention):

‘That this Synod rejoices in being part of the worldwide Anglican Communion as an expression of the life of the Trinity and commits itself to the ongoing wellbeing of that Communion.’

Appendix B THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION COVENANT



Introduction to the Covenant Text

“This life is revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us – we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have communion with us; and truly our communion is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. These things we write so that our joy may be complete.” (1 John 1.2-4).

1. 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”¹. This life of the One God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shapes and displays itself through the very existence and ordering of the Church.
1. Our divine calling into communion is established in God’s purposes for the whole of creation (Eph 1:10; 3:9ff.). It is extended to all humankind, so that, in our sharing of God’s life as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God might restore in us the divine image. Through time, according to the Scriptures, God has furthered this calling through covenants made with Noah, Abraham, Israel, and David. The prophet Jeremiah looked forward to a new covenant not written on tablets of stone but upon the heart (Jer 31.31-34). In God’s Son, Christ Jesus, a new covenant is given us, established in his “blood ... poured out for the many for the forgiveness of sins” (Mt 26:28), secured through his resurrection from the dead (Eph 1:19-23), and sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit poured into our hearts (Rom 5:5). Into this covenant of death to sin and of new life in Christ we are baptized, and empowered to share God’s communion in Christ with all people, to the ends of the earth and of creation.
1. We humbly recognize that this calling and gift of communion entails responsibilities for our common life before God as we seek, through grace, to be faithful in our service of God’s purposes for the world. Joined in one universal Church, which is Christ’s Body, spread throughout the earth, we serve his gospel even as we are enabled to be made one across the dividing walls of human sin and estrangement (Eph 2.12-22). The forms of this life in the Church, caught up in the mystery of divine communion, reveal to the hostile and divisive power of the world the “manifold wisdom of God” (Eph 3:9-10). Faithfulness, honesty, gentleness, humility, patience, forgiveness, and love itself, lived out in mutual deference and service (Mk 10.44-45) among the Church’s people and through its ministries, contribute to building up the body of Christ as it grows to maturity (Eph 4.1-16; Col 3.8-17).
1. In the providence of God, which holds sway even over our divisions caused by sin, various families of churches have grown up within the universal Church in the course of history. Among these families is the Anglican Communion, which provides a particular charism and identity among the many followers and servants of Jesus. 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. Therefore, we covenant together as churches of this Anglican Communion to be faithful to God’s promises through the historic faith we confess, our common worship, our participation in God’s mission, and the way we live together.
1. To covenant together is not intended to change the character of this Anglican expression of Christian faith. Rather, we recognise the importance of renewing in a solemn way our commitment to one another, and to the common understanding of faith and order we have received, so that the bonds of affection which hold us together may be re-affirmed and intensified. We do this in order to reflect, in our relations with one another, God’s own faithfulness and promises towards us in Christ (2 Cor 1.20-22).

¹ *The Church of the Triune God*, The Cyprus Statement of the International Commission for Anglican Orthodox Theological Dialogue, 2007, paragraph 1,2. *The Anglican Communion Covenant* page 2

² Cf. The Preface to the Declaration of Assent, Canon C15 of the Church of England.

³ The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons

1. We are a people who live, learn, and pray by and with the Scriptures as God's Word. We seek to adore God in thanks and praise and to make intercession for the needs of people everywhere through common prayer, united across many cultures and languages. We are privileged to share in the mission of the apostles to bring the gospel of Christ to all nations and peoples, not only in words but also in deeds of compassion and justice that witness to God's character and the triumph of Christ over sin and death. We give ourselves as servants of a greater unity among the divided Christians of the world. May the Lord help us to "preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4.5).

1. Our faith embodies a coherent testimony to what we have received from God's Word and the Church's long-standing witness. Our life together reflects the blessings of God (even as it exposes our failures in faith, hope and love) in growing our Communion into a truly global family. The mission we pursue aims at serving the great promises of God in Christ that embrace the peoples and the world God so loves. This mission is carried out in shared responsibility and stewardship of resources, and in interdependence among ourselves and with the wider Church.

1. Our prayer is that God will redeem our struggles and weakness, renew and enrich our common life and use the Anglican Communion to witness effectively in all the world, working with all people of good will, to the new life and hope found in Christ Jesus.

The Anglican Communion Covenant

Preamble

We, as Churches of the Anglican Communion, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, solemnly covenant together in these following affirmations and commitments. As people of God, drawn from "every nation, tribe, people and language" (Rev 7.9), we do this in order to proclaim more effectively in our different contexts the grace of God revealed in the gospel, to offer God's love in responding to the needs of the world, to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and together with all God's people to attain the full stature of Christ (Eph 4.3,13).

Section One: Our Inheritance of Faith

1.1 Each Church affirms:

(1.1.1) its communion in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, worshipping the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(1.1.2) the catholic and apostolic faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation². The historic formularies of the Church of England³, forged in the context of the European Reformation and acknowledged and appropriated in various ways in the Anglican Communion, bear authentic witness to this faith. *The Anglican Communion Covenant page 3*

⁴The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1886/1888

⁵The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1886/1888

⁶cf. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral 1886/1888, The Preface to the Declaration of Assent, Canon C15 of the Church of England.

⁷cf. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral 1886/1888

(1.1.3) the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary for salvation and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith⁴.

(1.1.4) the Apostles' Creed, as the baptismal symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith⁵.

(1.1.5) the two sacraments ordained by Christ himself – Baptism and the Supper of the Lord – ministered with the unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by him⁶.

(1.1.6) 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 Church⁷.

(1.1.7) the shared patterns of our common prayer and liturgy which form, sustain and nourish our worship of God and our faith and life together.

(1.1.8) its participation in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God, and that this mission is shared with other Churches and traditions beyond this Covenant.

1.2 In living out this inheritance of faith together in varying contexts, each Church, reliant on the Holy Spirit, commits itself:

(1.2.1) to teach and act in continuity and consonance with Scripture and the catholic and apostolic faith, order and tradition, as received by the Churches of the Anglican Communion, mindful of the common councils of the Communion and our ecumenical agreements.

(1.2.2) to uphold and proclaim a pattern of Christian theological and moral reasoning and discipline that is rooted in and answerable to the teaching of Holy Scripture and the catholic tradition.

(1.2.3) to witness, in this reasoning, to the renewal of humanity and the whole created order through the death and resurrection of Christ, and to reflect the holiness that in consequence God gives to, and requires from, his people.

(1.2.4) to hear, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the Scriptures in our different contexts, informed by the attentive and communal reading of - and costly witness to - the Scriptures by all the faithful, by the teaching of bishops and synods, and by the results of rigorous study by lay and ordained scholars.

(1.2.5) to ensure that biblical texts are received, read and interpreted faithfully, respectfully, comprehensively and coherently, with the expectation that Scripture continues to illuminate and transform the Church and its members, and through them, individuals, cultures and societies.

(1.2.6) to encourage and be open to prophetic and faithful leadership in ministry and mission so as to enable God's people to respond in courageous witness to the power of the gospel in the world. *The Anglican Communion Covenant page 4*

⁸ IASCOME Report, ACC-13

⁹ The five Marks of Mission are set out in the MISSIO Report of 1999, building on work at ACC-6 and ACC-8.

(1.2.7) to seek in all things to uphold the solemn obligation to nurture and sustain eucharistic communion, in accordance with existing canonical disciplines, as we strive under God for the fuller realisation of the communion of all Christians.

(1.2.8) to pursue a common pilgrimage with the whole Body of Christ continually to discern the fullness of truth into which the Spirit leads us, that peoples from all nations may be set free to receive new and abundant life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section Two: The Life We Share with Others: Our Anglican Vocation

2.1 Each Church affirms:

(2.1.1) communion as a gift of God given so that God's people from east and west, north and south, may together declare the glory of the Lord and be both a sign of God's reign in the Holy Spirit and the first fruits in the world of God's redemption in Christ.

(2.1.2) its gratitude for God's gracious providence extended to us down through the ages: our origins in the Church of the apostles; the ancient common traditions; the rich history of the Church in Britain and Ireland reshaped by the Reformation, and our growth into a global communion through the expanding missionary work of the Church; our ongoing refashioning by the Holy Spirit through the gifts and sacrificial witness of Anglicans from around the world; and our summons into a more fully developed communion life.

(2.1.3) in humility our call to constant repentance: for our failures in exercising patience and charity and in recognizing Christ in one another; our misuse of God's gracious gifts; our failure to heed God's call to serve; and our exploitation one of another.

(2.1.4) the imperative of God's mission into which the Communion is called, a vocation and blessing in which each Church is joined with others in Christ in the work of establishing God's reign. As the Communion continues to develop into a worldwide family of interdependent churches, we embrace challenges and opportunities for mission at local, regional, and international levels. In this, we cherish our mission heritage as offering Anglicans distinctive opportunities for mission collaboration.

(2.1.5) that our common mission is a mission shared with other Churches and traditions beyond this Covenant. We embrace opportunities for the discovery of the life of the whole gospel, and for reconciliation and shared mission with the Church throughout the world. We affirm the ecumenical vocation of Anglicanism to the full visible unity of the Church in accordance with Christ's prayer that "all may be one". It is with all the saints in every place and time that we will comprehend the fuller dimensions of Christ's redemptive and immeasurable love.

2.2 In recognition of these affirmations,

each Church, reliant on the Holy Spirit, commits itself:

(2.2.1) to answer God's call to undertake evangelisation and to share in the healing and reconciling mission "for our blessed but broken, hurting and fallen world"⁸, and, with mutual accountability, to share our God-given spiritual and material resources in this task.

(2.2.2) to undertake in this mission, which is the mission of God in Christ⁹: *The Anglican Communion Covenant* page 5

¹⁰ *Church as Communion* n26

¹¹ WCC 1954 Evanston, *Christ the Hope of the World*

¹² Moscow Statement, 43

¹³ IARCCUM, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, 118

¹⁴ Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, WCC,

¹⁵ A Letter from Alexandria, the Primates, March 2009

¹⁶ Lambeth Conference 1930

(2.2.2.a) “to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God” and to bring all to repentance and faith;

(2.2.2.b) “to teach, baptize and nurture new believers”, making disciples of all nations (Mt 28.19) through the quickening power of the Holy Spirit¹⁰ and drawing them into the one Body of Christ whose faith, calling and hope are one in the Lord (Eph 4.4-6);

(2.2.2.c) “to respond to human need by loving service”, disclosing God’s reign through humble ministry to those most needy (Mk 10.42-45; Mt 18.4; 25.31-45);

(2.2.2.d) “to seek to transform unjust structures of society” as the Church stands vigilantly with Christ proclaiming both judgment and salvation to the nations of the world¹¹, and manifesting through our actions on behalf of God’s righteousness the Spirit’s transfiguring power¹²;

(2.2.2.e) “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain and renew the life of the earth” as essential aspects of our mission in communion¹³.

(2.2.3) to engage in this mission with humility and an openness to our own ongoing conversion in the face of our unfaithfulness and failures in witness.

(2.2.4) to revive and renew structures for mission which will awaken and challenge the whole people of God to work, pray and give for the spread of the gospel.

(2.2.5) to order its mission in the joyful and reverent worship of God, thankful that in our eucharistic communion “Christ is the source and goal of the unity of the Church and of the renewal of human community”¹⁴.

Section Three: Our Unity and Common Life

3.1 Each Church affirms:

(3.1.1) that by our participation in Baptism and Eucharist, we are incorporated into the one body of the Church of Jesus Christ, and called by Christ to pursue all things that make for peace and build up our common life.

(3.1.2) its resolve to live in a Communion of 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”¹⁵. 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”¹⁶ and of the other instruments of Communion.

(3.1.3) the central role of bishops as guardians and teachers of faith, as leaders in mission, and as a visible sign of unity, representing the universal Church to the local, and the local *The Anglican Communion Covenant* page 6

¹⁷ Constitution of the ACC, Article 3 and Schedule

¹⁸ cf. the Objects of the ACC are set out in Article 2 of its Constitution.

¹⁹ Report of the Windsor Continuation Group, 69.

²⁰ cf IATDC, Communion, Conflict and Hope, paragraph 113.

Church to the universal and the local Churches to one another. This ministry is exercised personally, collegially and within and for the eucharistic community. We receive and maintain the historic threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons, ordained for service in the Church of God, as they call all the baptised into the mission of Christ.

(3.1.4) the importance of instruments in the Anglican Communion to assist in the discernment, articulation and exercise of our shared faith and common life and mission. The life of communion includes an ongoing engagement with the diverse expressions of apostolic authority, from synods and episcopal councils to local witness, in a way which continually interprets and articulates the common faith of the Church's members (*consensus fidelium*). In addition to the many and varied links which sustain our life together, we acknowledge four particular Instruments at the level of the Anglican Communion which express this co-operative service in the life of communion.

I. We accord the Archbishop of Canterbury, as the bishop of the See of Canterbury with which Anglicans have historically been in communion, a primacy of honour and respect among the college of bishops in the Anglican Communion as first among equals (*primus inter pares*). As a focus and means of unity, the Archbishop gathers and works with the Lambeth Conference and Primates' Meeting, and presides in the Anglican Consultative Council.

II. The Lambeth Conference expresses episcopal collegiality worldwide, and brings together the bishops for common worship, counsel, consultation and encouragement in their ministry of guarding the faith and unity of the Communion and equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Eph 4.12) and mission.

III. The Anglican Consultative Council is comprised of lay, clerical and episcopal representatives from our Churches¹⁷. It facilitates the co-operative work of the Churches of the Anglican Communion, co-ordinates aspects of international Anglican ecumenical and mission work, calls the Churches into mutual responsibility and interdependence, and advises on developing provincial structures¹⁸.

IV. The Primates' Meeting is convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury for mutual support, prayer and counsel. The authority that primates bring to the meeting arises from their own positions as the senior bishops of their Provinces, and the fact that they are in conversation with their own Houses of Bishops and located within their own synodical structures¹⁹. In the Primates' Meeting, the Primates and Moderators are called to work as representatives of their Provinces in collaboration with one another in mission and in doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters that have Communion-wide implications.

It is the responsibility of each Instrument to consult with, respond to, and support each other Instrument and the Churches of the Communion²⁰. Each Instrument may initiate and commend a process of discernment and a direction for the Communion and its Churches.

3.2 Acknowledging our interdependent life,

each Church, reliant on the Holy Spirit, commits itself:

(3.2.1) to have regard for the common good of the Communion in the exercise of its autonomy, to support the work of the Instruments of Communion with the spiritual and *The Anglican Communion Covenant* page 7

²¹ Toronto Congress 1963, and the Ten Principles of Partnership.

²² cf. the Schedule to the Dar es Salaam Communiqué of the Primates' Meeting, February 2007

material resources available to it, and to receive their work with a readiness to undertake reflection upon their counsels, and to endeavour to accommodate their recommendations.

(3.2.2) to respect the constitutional autonomy of all of the Churches of the Anglican Communion, while upholding our mutual responsibility and interdependence in the Body of Christ²¹, and the responsibility of each to the Communion as a whole²².

(3.2.3) 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. Such prayer, study and debate is an essential feature of the life of the Church as it seeks to be led by the Spirit into all truth and to proclaim the gospel afresh in each generation. Some issues, which are perceived as controversial or new when they arise, may well evoke a deeper understanding of the implications of God's revelation to us; others may prove to be distractions or even obstacles to the faith. All such matters therefore need to be tested by shared discernment in the life of the Church.

(3.2.4) to seek a shared mind with other Churches, through the Communion's councils, about matters of common concern, in a way consistent with the Scriptures, the common standards of faith, and the canon laws of our churches. Each Church will undertake wide consultation with the other Churches of the Anglican Communion and with the Instruments and Commissions of the Communion.

(3.2.5) to act with diligence, care and caution in respect of any action which may provoke controversy, which by its intensity, substance or extent could threaten the unity of the Communion and the effectiveness or credibility of its mission.

(3.2.6) 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.

(3.2.7) to have in mind that our bonds of affection and the love of Christ compel us always to uphold the highest degree of communion possible.

Section Four: Our Covenanted Life Together

4 Each Church affirms the following principles and procedures, and, reliant on the Holy Spirit, commits itself to their implementation.

4.1 Adoption of the Covenant

(4.1.1) Each Church adopting this Covenant affirms that it enters into the Covenant as a commitment to relationship in submission to God. Each Church freely offers this commitment to other Churches in order to live more fully into the ecclesial communion and interdependence which is foundational to the Churches of the Anglican Communion. The Anglican Communion is a fellowship, within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, of national or regional Churches, in which each recognises in the others the bonds of a common loyalty to Christ expressed through a common faith and order, a shared inheritance in worship, life and mission, and a readiness to live in an interdependent life.

(4.1.2) In adopting the Covenant for itself, each Church recognises in the preceding sections a statement of faith, mission and interdependence of life which is consistent with its own life and with the doctrine and practice of the Christian faith as it has received them. It recognises these elements as foundational for the life of the Anglican Communion and therefore for the relationships among the covenanting Churches. *The Anglican Communion Covenant page 8*

(4.1.3) 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.

(4.1.4) Every Church of the Anglican Communion, as recognised in accordance with the Constitution of the Anglican Consultative Council, is invited to enter into this Covenant according to its own constitutional procedures.

(4.1.5) The Instruments of Communion may invite other Churches to adopt the Covenant using the same procedures as set out by the Anglican Consultative Council for the amendment of its schedule of membership. Adoption of this Covenant does not confer any right of recognition by, or membership of, the Instruments of Communion, which shall be decided by those Instruments themselves.

(4.1.6) This Covenant becomes active for a Church when that Church adopts the Covenant through the procedures of its own Constitution and Canons.

4.2 The Maintenance of the Covenant and Dispute Resolution

(4.2.1) The Covenant operates to express the common commitments and mutual accountability which hold each Church in the relationship of communion one with another. Recognition of, and fidelity to, this Covenant, enable mutual recognition and communion. Participation in the Covenant implies a recognition by each Church of those elements which must be maintained in its own life and for which it is accountable to the Churches with which it is in Communion in order to sustain the relationship expressed in this Covenant.

(4.2.2) The Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion, responsible to the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting, shall monitor the functioning of the Covenant in the life of the Anglican Communion on behalf of the Instruments. In this regard, the Standing Committee shall be supported by such other committees or commissions as may be mandated to assist in carrying out this function and to advise it on questions relating to the Covenant.

(4.2.3) When questions arise relating to the meaning of the Covenant, or about the compatibility of an action by a covenanting Church with the Covenant, it is the duty of each covenanting Church to seek to live out the commitments of Section 3.2. Such questions may be raised by a Church itself, another covenanting Church or the Instruments of Communion.

(4.2.4) Where a shared mind has not been reached the matter shall be referred to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall make every effort to facilitate agreement, and may take advice from such bodies as it deems appropriate to determine a view on the nature of the matter at question and those relational consequences which may result. Where appropriate, the Standing Committee shall refer the question to both the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting for advice.

(4.2.5) The Standing Committee may request a Church to defer a controversial action. If a Church declines to defer such action, the Standing Committee may recommend to any Instrument of Communion relational consequences which may specify a provisional limitation of participation in, or suspension from, that Instrument until the completion of the process set out below.

(4.2.6) On the basis of advice received from the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting, the Standing Committee may make a declaration that an action or decision is or would be "incompatible with the Covenant". *The Anglican Communion Covenant page 9*

(4.2.7) On the basis of the advice received, the Standing Committee shall make recommendations as to relational consequences which flow from an action incompatible with the Covenant. These recommendations may be addressed to the Churches of the Anglican Communion or to the Instruments of the Communion and address the extent to which the decision of any covenanting Church impairs or limits the communion between that Church and the other Churches of the Communion, and the practical consequences of such impairment or limitation. Each Church or each Instrument shall determine whether or not to accept such recommendations.

(4.2.8) Participation in the decision making of the Standing Committee or of the Instruments of Communion in respect to section 4.2 shall be limited to those members of the Instruments of Communion who are representatives of those churches who have adopted the Covenant, or who are still in the process of adoption.

(4.2.9) Each Church undertakes to put into place such mechanisms, agencies or institutions, consistent with its own Constitution and Canons, as can undertake to oversee the maintenance of the affirmations and commitments of the Covenant in the life of that Church, and to relate to the Instruments of Communion on matters pertinent to the Covenant.

4.3 Withdrawing from the Covenant

(4.3.1) Any covenanting Church may decide to withdraw from the Covenant. Although such withdrawal does not imply an automatic withdrawal from the Instruments of Communion or a repudiation of its Anglican character, it may raise a question relating to the meaning of the Covenant, and of compatibility with the principles incorporated within it, and trigger the provisions set out in section 4.2 above.

4.4 The Covenant Text and its amendment

(4.4.1) The Covenant consists of the text set out in this document in the Preamble, Sections One to Four and the Declaration. The Introduction to the Covenant Text, which shall always be annexed to the Covenant text, is not part of the Covenant, but shall be accorded authority in understanding the purpose of the Covenant.

(4.4.2) Any covenanting Church or Instrument of Communion may submit a proposal to amend the Covenant to the Instruments of Communion through the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall send the proposal to the Anglican Consultative Council, the Primates' Meeting, the covenanting Churches and any other body as it may consider appropriate for advice. The Standing Committee shall make a recommendation on the proposal in the light of advice offered, and submit the proposal with any revisions to the covenanting Churches. The amendment is operative when ratified by three quarters of such Churches. The Standing Committee shall adopt a procedure for promulgation of the amendment.

Our Declaration

With joy and with firm resolve, we declare our Churches to be partakers in this Anglican Communion Covenant, offering ourselves for fruitful service and binding ourselves more closely in the truth and love of Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory for ever. Amen.

“Now may the God of Peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

Amen.” (Hebrews 13.20, 21)