

2. Anglicans and Ecumenism

Anglican ecumenical engagement has a long history. While the contemporary ecumenical movement is often dated from the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910, Anglicans were explicitly conscious of their vocation to work for Christian unity some half a century earlier, as the seeds of today's Anglican Communion structures were being sown – and, of course, contacts and conversations with other Christian traditions far pre-date either of these.

As Owen Chadwick records,ⁱ when the Bishop of Montreal was urging the Archbishop of Canterbury to call the very first Lambeth Conference, among his arguments was the assertion that such a Conference would serve an invaluable role in pursuing 'reunion' between Anglicans and other Christians. Though the suggestion was originally 'taken up only with politeness', soon a significant part of Lambeth Conference agenda was devoted to relations with other church traditions, even if these did, in early years, give rise to some rather prickly resolutions on the Roman Catholic Church.

The first two Lambeth Conferences of 1867 and 1878 made only brief reference to Christian unity, but in 1888, nine of the nineteen resolutions had an ecumenical dimension, among them, in Resolution 11, the affirmation of what is now known as the 'The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral', whose four articles 'in the opinion of this Conference ... supply a basis on which approach may be by God's blessing made towards home reunion'. The full text of these articles is carried later in this chapter, and to a very considerable degree they remain a touchstone for Anglican encounters with other Christian traditions, as was reaffirmed in Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution IV:2.

All subsequent Lambeth Conferences have given significant consideration to ecumenical matters, both in addressing the details of particular relationships and in issuing broad resolutions on the nature of our vocation to strive for unity. One such is Resolution 9 of 1920, from which the title of this book is drawn. These have formed the bedrock on which subsequent endeavours have built. (Further consideration of the Lambeth Conference's role in ecumenical relations is given in Chapter 13.)

When the 1966 Lambeth Conference endorsed the proposal for an Anglican Consultative Council, four of the eight listed functions ('e' to 'h') addressed ecumenical issues. Though others have been added to what is now described as the Object of the ACC, the four remain unchanged:

- e. To keep before national and regional churches the importance of the fullest possible Anglican collaboration with other Christian churches.
- f. To encourage and guide Anglican participation in the ecumenical movement and the ecumenical organisations, to co-operate with the World Council of Churches and the world confessional bodies on behalf of the Anglican Communion, and to make arrangements for the conduct of pan-Anglican conversations with the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches, and other Churches.
- g. To advise on matters arising out of national or regional church union negotiations or conversations and on subsequent relations with united churches.

- h. To advise on problems of inter-Anglican communication and to help in the dissemination of Anglican and ecumenical information.

Reports on IASCER's work were made by incumbent Directors of Ecumenical Affairs to ACC-12 and 13, which passed affirmative resolutions. Among these, 12.26 reminded member Churches of IASCER's role in advising and supporting national and regional ecumenical initiatives; and 13.32 endorsed IASCER's resolutions passed between 2002 and 2004, particularly commending the Guidelines on Ecumenical Participation in Ordinations (carried in Chapter 4). Reports have also been made from time to time to the Primates' Meeting, and to the Joint Standing Committee (JSC) of the Primates and the ACC which has in turn referred work to IASCER. Because of the distinctive *Indaba* approach taken at the 2008 Lambeth Conference, no formal report was made, but IASCER's input was received in other ways, including through advice offered to the Lambeth Conference Design Group (on all of which see Chapter 13).

In this way the work of IASCER has been integrated into the wider life of the Communion at a formal level, particularly through the Instruments of Communion. That said, there are serious concerns about how the fruits of our ecumenical endeavours can be more tangibly and comprehensively received and incorporated into Anglican life, and these are addressed in Chapter 6.

In pursuing its mandate, IASCER of course drew heavily on the views of the Instruments of Communion (particularly the Resolutions and Report, *Called to Be One*, of Section IV of the 1998 Lambeth Conference, as previously mentioned). From all this, and from what was and became implicit in its own deliberations, IASCER endorsed a set of principles of the Anglican approach to ecumenism.

These principles were first offered by the Director of Ecumenical Affairs, Gregory Cameron, as part of an overview of Anglican ecumenical engagement to the Ninth Forum on Bilateral Dialogues facilitated by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC, in Breklum in March 2008. In reviewing this contribution, IASCER realised that a clear explication of such principles could provide a valuable resource for all Anglicans engaged in relationships with other Christian traditions, and passed a resolution commending them for consideration and further development by ACC and IASCUFO:

Resolution 17.08: Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism

IASCER:

- welcomes the document 'Principles of Anglican Engagement with Ecumenism' prepared by the Director of Ecumenical Affairs, and commends it to ACC-14 for reflection and discussion
- hopes that the document may be further developed by IASCUFO as a resource for ecumenical work in the Anglican Communion.

A more mature form of these principles, now reduced from six to four, was refined by Canon Cameron through the discussion at IASCER and in subsequent informal consultations:

Four Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism

1. The Goal of the Ecumenical Movement

The Anglican Communion is organised as a family of national and regional Churches living in communion with one another. These Churches understand themselves to belong to the One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ. The Anglican Communion is a therefore a partial expression of a deeper reality, and the Communion is not self-contained. Anglicans believe that God calls all Christians into the full visible unity of the one Church of Jesus Christ in order to be a living expression of God's purposes for the reconciliation of the whole of creation. Anglican Churches are therefore committed to the full visible unity of the Church, according to the ancient understanding of church unity (as first developed in the writings of Ignatius of Antioch, c100): namely, all the people of God in one place gathered around their bishop in one eucharistic fellowship, sharing one proclamation of one faith, with one ministry in the service of the Gospel, and oriented towards mission.

We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptised into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all, and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people.

WCC 3rd Assembly, New Delhi, 1961

In this conciliar fellowship each local Church possesses, in communion with the others, the fullness of catholicity, witnesses to the same apostolic faith, and therefore recognises the others as belonging to the same Church of Christ and guided by the same Spirit.

WCC 5th Assembly Nairobi, 1975

2. The Task of the Ecumenical Movement

Anglicans acknowledge that communion with the Triune God, which is a gift established by grace through faith, entails a serious obligation to grow into fullness of communion with all Christians. The task of Anglican engagement in the ecumenical movement is therefore to 'recognise and receive' those elements of the one true Church which Anglicans apprehend in their ecumenical partners. This task calls for and promotes ecumenism on many different levels - not just in doctrinal dialogue, but also in the invitation to share worship, prayer and the exploration of spirituality. It also entails shared engagement with the world, and the development of a common mission and witness. The ecumenical commitment of the Anglican Communion should be expressed all round (*towards all ecumenical partners without favour*) and at every level (*from the local to the global*).

'We believe that God wills fellowship. By God's own act this fellowship was made in and through Jesus Christ, and its life is in his Spirit. We believe that it is God's purpose to manifest this fellowship, so far as this world is concerned, in an outward, visible, and united society, holding one faith, having its own recognised officers, using God-given means of grace, and inspiring all its members to the world-wide service of the Kingdom

of God. This is what we mean by the Catholic Church. ... This united fellowship is not visible in the world today. On the one hand there are other ancient episcopal Communion in East and West, to whom ours is bound by many ties of common faith and tradition. On the other hand there are the great non-episcopal Communion, standing for rich elements of truth, liberty and life which might otherwise have been obscured or neglected. With them we are closely linked by many affinities, racial, historical and spiritual. We cherish the earnest hope that all these Communion, and our own, may be led by the Spirit into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. But in fact we are all organised in different groups, each one keeping to itself gifts that rightly belong to the whole fellowship, and tending to live its own life apart from the rest. ... The vision which rises before us is that of a Church, genuinely Catholic, loyal to all truth, and gathering into its fellowship all 'who profess and call themselves Christians', within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order, bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present, shall be possessed in common, and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ. Within this unity Christian Communion now separated from one another would retain much that has long been distinctive in their methods of worship and service. It is through a rich diversity of life and devotion that the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled.'

From the Appeal to all Christian People, Resolution 9, 1920 Lambeth Conference

3. The Processes of Ecumenism

Anglicans seek to live 'in the highest degree of Communion possible', and should strive to avoid breaking or impairing the degree of expression of the communion given to us in Christ which is already manifested. Anglicans seek to participate in the greatest possible practical expressions of the communion we share with our ecumenical partners. This often means moving towards eucharistic hospitality at an early stage of relationship. (The most common formula in Anglican Churches being admission of all baptised and communicant members of trinitarian Churches to eucharistic communion in Anglican Churches.) Anglicans are willing to move towards unity by stages. This means Churches will consider entering into expressed degrees of recognition of communion as steps on the way to full visible communion. Anglicans are even prepared to live with degrees of 'bearable anomaly', in which current differences of practice are tolerated for a temporary period, provided there is a commitment to move beyond them.

'This Conference recognises that the process of moving towards full, visible unity may entail temporary anomalies, and believes that some anomalies may be bearable when there is an agreed goal of visible unity, but that there should always be an impetus towards their resolution and, thus, towards the removal of the principal anomaly of disunity.'

Lambeth Conference 1998, Resolution IV.1.c

(Notes: The concept of 'the highest degree of communion possible' was originally developed in the context of intra-Anglican conversations in relation to the potential divisions which might arise in response to the ordination of women to priesthood or episcopate. The Eames Commission understood its task as seeking to find ways for Anglicans, faced with differences on this issue, to be able to maintain 'the highest degree of communion possible'.

'Proceeding by stages' may involve specific agreements or covenants of appropriate co-operation in mission, in fellowship, in the sharing of worship, of Eucharistic hospitality and

of Eucharistic sharing in advance of the recognition of ‘full Communion’. Full Communion is a term which must be handled with care, and is usually regarded as itself a stage on the way to organic unity, but which implies full interchangeability of ministry and membership. Anglicans are therefore familiar with agreements of ‘mutual recognition’, ‘communion’ or ‘full communion’, even though there remains some discussion about the proper use of such terminology.)

4. The Content of Church Unity

Anglicans take very seriously questions about the content of the teaching of the Christian faith. This faith embraces the whole of life and the ordering of the Church according to God’s will. Anglicans seek the proclamation of a common faith, the celebration of common sacraments and the exercise of a common ministry, which implies a high degree of convergence and agreement. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, adopted at the 1888 Lambeth Conference and which adapts principles formulated first at the 1886 Chicago Missionary Conference, remains the continuing Anglican understanding of the basis upon which ‘reunion’ between the Churches might be built:

- i. 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.
- ii. The Apostles’ Creed, as the baptismal symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.
- iii. 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 him;
- iv. 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.

Canon Gregory K Cameron
ACO, March 2009

These Principles encapsulate the essence of many years of discussion. The issues raised during this discussion are likely to remain pertinent as the Anglican Communion pursues its ecumenical vocation in various and evolving circumstances. It is therefore worth looking at the thinking behind the Principles in some detail.

The Goal of the Ecumenical Movement

As with every aspect of the Christian life, the goal of Anglicans in our engagement with ecumenism is to be conformed to Christ and to live as he would have us live.

From early on IASCER members were explicitly clear that we held no brief to preserve or defend something labelled ‘Anglicanism’. As one person put it, ‘Anglicanism in and of itself has no eschatological destiny’. While Anglicans hope and trust that within Anglican tradition we have been gifted with elements that authentically reflect aspects of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ to which we belong, we acknowledge that such reflection is at best partial. We have never seen ourselves as ‘self-sufficient’.ⁱⁱ Therefore, though we believe we have much to share with others, we also know we remain impoverished as long as we remain divided; and, more than this, that our divisions undermine and impede the ability of the people of God to express God’s reconciling purposes for all

creation. We cannot remain as we are, nor can we wait for eschatological fulfilment. For the sake of God's mission, Anglicans, as faithful and obedient Christians, have no option but to labour for unity in Christ, and in the Body of Christ.

Anglicans are therefore committed to nothing less than 'the full, visible unity' of the Church. This is the terminology that we have come to use to describe our vocation, and that was upheld in Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution IV:1 and reaffirmed in 2008, in *Indaba Reflections*, 71. We use it in preference to other descriptions such as 'full communion', which may have other interpretations, for example, often describing some form of reconciled diversity between continuing parallel ecclesial jurisdictions, or even organic unity between two or more partners. Important though such agreements can be, they are only one stage (see 'Process' below) on a longer journey to our goal. Yet communion as the fellowship, the *koinonia*, we share in Christ, is at the heart of what we are called to seek. As *Indaba Reflections*, 72 puts it, 'We recognise that all the baptised are brought through their grafting into the Body of Christ, into a relationship of communion with one another. The vocation of the Anglican Communion and the ecumenical vocation are therefore one and the same: to deepen our expression of the gift of full communion imparted to us already through our communion with and in Christ'. Chapter 3 records how IASCER discussed what we might mean by such affirmations, and attempted to clarify the various ways we use and understand the term 'communion', and explore some of the questions that all this has raised.

While in some respects, the contemporary pursuit of ecumenism has its roots in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in fact Anglicans look back to the very earliest Christian times for an understanding of what Jesus' prayer of John 17:22 might mean in the 'lived life' of the Church. We share with those fellow members of the Body of Christ of the first and second centuries a vision that finds practical expression in the unity in faith of all the people of God in one place gathered around their bishop in one eucharistic fellowship, and so sharing together in God's mission to God's world. For this reason, our understanding of Eucharist (along with Baptism, as the two sacraments ordained by Jesus) and of episcopacy and the whole ordained ministry, are among the most central areas for discussion in our ecumenical encounters. The considerable work that IASCER pursued in these two areas is recorded in Chapters 4 and 5.

It may be worth noting why we generally refer to the Anglican Communion as a family of Anglican Churches, and rarely speak of 'the Anglican Church'. Anglicans acknowledge a creative tension between the understanding of 'local Church', which is that portion of God's people gathered around their bishop, usually in a territorial diocese, and 'Church' as a term or description for a national or regional ecclesial community, which is bound together by a national character, and/or common liturgical life, governance and canon law. Traditionally, Anglicans have asserted the ecclesial character of the national Church as the privileged unit of ecclesiastical life. The Church of England's very existence was predicated upon such an assumption at the time of the Reformation. Recognised in most cases as 'Provinces', these national or regional Churches are the bodies through which the life of the Anglican Communion has been expressed. In practice, Provinces enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy – which we believe we are called to retain, even if we are searching for better ways of expressing and living out our interdependence and the mutual commitment we have to one another through the 'bonds of affection' of this family of Churches. Alongside all this, Anglicans also acknowledge that to speak of being a Church at the global level is to make a very high ecclesial claim, not least of our own unity in faith and life where, for all our aspirations, we know we fall short of what we are called to be.

The Task of the Ecumenical Movement

Though in one sense IASCER sat lightly to preserving Anglicanism, in another, we shared strong convictions that Anglican tradition has been gifted by God with distinctive aspects that to a considerable degree authentically reflect elements of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ to which we belong. And the same is true of other Christian traditions.

As noted in Chapter 1, Anglican ecumenists therefore need a strong sense of Anglican identity so that we can articulate this, and share all that we believe is good about it with our partners. The publication of *The Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion* was warmly welcomed by IASCER as a particularly helpful resource in this area (see further comment in Chapter 12).

The task of ecumenism is for us to ‘recognise and receive’ these elements from one another, and through this to grow together in the unity of the faith we profess. In this we believe that the best and most authentic aspects of each will be preserved as we journey ever more closely with one another. We are not in pursuit of some ‘lowest common denominator’ across the whole spectrum of Christian expression. Rather, each in our partialness can expect freely and joyfully to be enriched by our increasing mutual openness and closeness, as we learn better to share the gifts of God, given in the manifestation of the Spirit to us for the common good, that is, for building up the Body of Christ until we all of us come to unity in faith and knowledge and to maturity in Christ our Lord (cf. 1 Corinthians 12.7, Ephesians 4.7-13).

One way that we can be helped in our efforts to recognise God’s gifts in each other is to pursue, as Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution IV.2 put it, ‘the further explication of the characteristics which belong to the full, visible unity of the Church (described variously as the goal, the marks, or the portrait of visible unity)’. Some of IASCER’s work, particularly in addressing key themes, began to do this.

It is worth noting that it soon became clear to IASCER that every dialogue is different. Each partner is unique, and often our common history (or lack of it) or the context in which we now meet also has distinctive aspects that we share with no others in quite the same way. What there is for us to recognise and receive, as well as offer, may vary considerably between ecumenical relationships.

An expectation that we should be ready to receive from others challenges us to fresh consideration of what it means to live with ‘unity in diversity’. As we are now experiencing within the Anglican Communion this is not always easy. Yet our understanding of our vocation to full visible unity calls us to explore what it might mean for us from an ecumenical perspective. IASCER’s consideration of what we meant by coherence and consistency in dialogues and agreements also had to embrace such legitimate variation.

The experiences of the four United Churches of South Asia give tremendous ground for encouragement. They are members of the Anglican Communion alongside thirty-four Anglican Provinces and six further Churches, two of which were not Anglican in origin but have come into full membership of the Communion: the Lusitanian Church in Portugal and the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church. In their joys in coming together and sharing their distinctive gifts, and even in their honesty over the struggles they faced in pursuing unity, they have much to teach us (see further comment in Chapter 7).

While pursuit of Christian unity through formal dialogues has tended to centre on questions of faith and order, it is not just in areas of theology and ecclesiology that we are called to be open to ‘recognise and receive’ from one another. Just as God’s loving and redemptive purposes reach to every part of his creation, so every part of Christian life is called into the unity that is God’s gift. Over the last decade or so the significance of this has increasingly been recognised and addressed in new ways in what might be termed ‘institutional ecumenism’, though co-operation at local level in everything from mission and social justice to prayer and Bible study is far more long-standing. The importance of ecumenism for all aspects of mission, not least advocacy and social justice, relief work and care of the environment, was stressed at the 2008 Lambeth Conference.ⁱⁱⁱ

A particularly significant development has been an engagement in what might be called ‘spiritual ecumenism’. There has been a growing realisation that through sharing our ‘faith journeys’, that is, experiences of the Christian life, people from different traditions can recognise that God is graciously at work in one another in ways we often had not previously appreciated. We have learned that recognition at this affective level of our shared fellowship in the gospel can provide a compelling glimpse of the unity to which we are called, and offer a powerful stimulus to the pursuit of this vocation, as well as broadening and strengthening our traditional modes of encounter. This approach can also enable our encounters with newly emerging non-denominational churches whose different structuring can make traditional forms of engagement less appropriate or effective.

IASCER strongly affirmed that our ecumenical vocation should not only embrace every aspect of the Christian life, it must also be pursued at every level. Conscious of the risk of becoming a rather rarefied and technical body, we aimed to counteract such tendencies, for example, through our contacts with the local churches, often with their ecumenical partners, in the places where we met (as mentioned in the previous chapter). Alongside this, we encouraged local and regional ecumenical initiatives, offering constructive assistance and suggestions where we could, sometimes through formal resolutions (see Chapter 9) and sometimes informally through correspondence and conversation. We also bore in mind the needs and contexts of local churches in our production and promotion of study material so that the fruits of our ecumenical life could more easily be harvested and enjoyed. It is hoped that this book also may assist in sharing the riches of our ecumenical pilgrimage more fully among Anglicans and our partners on the ecumenical journey. Communication is not an easy task among a global family of some eighty million members, and IASCER passes to IASCUFO its concern that we should aim to do more and do better in this area.

It was also IASCER’s intention that our work should strengthen our ability to express our ecumenical commitment ‘all round’, that is, towards all partners without favour. Our pursuit of consistency and coherence among all our ecumenical activities helped us address this task, even as we recognised that some of our partners were closer to us than others at the present moment of our journey. Ultimately full visible unity must embrace us all.

Ecumenism is thus an all round, every level, whole life undertaking, to be pursued through extending and strengthening webs of interconnection.

The Processes of Ecumenism

As already noted, ‘communion’ is a slippery word, yet it remains somehow at the centre of what we seek through the broadening and deepening relationships we pursue with other Christians.

Communion with one another arises from our communion with Jesus Christ, established in our incorporation into the Body of Christ in Baptism. It should therefore come as little surprise that mutual recognition of Baptism is often one of the most basic steps we can take to come closer to one another. In some parts of the world it can take time to achieve even this level of concord. IASCER strongly encouraged pursuit of such agreements where they do not currently exist, and warmly welcomed those recently reached at regional and local level, as recorded in Chapters 8 and 9.

Mutual recognition of Baptism opens the door to considering the extension of eucharistic hospitality – the admission to Holy Communion of baptised and communicant members of other trinitarian Churches. From these, further levels of agreement may follow, including various commitments to co-operation in mission, fellowship, and worship. Questions that arise early in dialogues tend to focus on ‘mutual recognition’ or ‘interchangeability’ of ministries and of ministers, which is why Baptism and Eucharist (Chapter 4) and Holy Orders (Chapter 5) were such significant elements of IASCER’s work.

Reviewing the whole breadth and diversity of Anglican ecumenical engagement, IASCER concluded that it was generally helpful to look at progress towards full visible unity in terms of stages, though with some flexibility of approach. Thus Decision 15.01, commenting on conversations between the Church of England and its Methodist and United Reformed partners (see Chapter 9), affirmed ‘the importance of (a) seeking unity by stages, with theological agreement accompanying each step, while recognising that ecumenical progress is not always sequentially linear, and (b) the avoidance of short-cuts in ecumenical dialogue’.

IASCER’s support for stages arose in part from our recognition that it is essential that partners should be clear about their goals, and that they are fully shared, when entering into dialogue or conversation. Sometimes goals can be too broadly and aspirationally drawn and look too far into some undefined future, or be over-ambitious and unachievable within the current context. It is not a failure of faithfulness, but rather godly wisdom, to begin with what is realistic before attempting further steps. To aim too high and then fall short risks demoralisation or, worse, a sense of failure and betrayal between ecumenical partners. Going forward by means of clear stages can help avoid such set-backs.

Proceeding by stages requires careful handling in some specific areas. As noted above, while committed to expressing ‘all round’ ecumenism, often we find ourselves closer to certain partners than to others. We must therefore be sensitive to ways in which a step forward with one partner may mean moving away from, or delaying rapprochement with, another. Furthermore, our various agreements must be compatible and coherent with one another. We must also consider questions of ‘transitivity’ – how far elements within the relationship between A and B have consequences for relations not only between B and C, but even between A and C (a complex issue, considered in Chapter 3).

In various ways agreements can throw up anomalies, especially during transition periods. Some of these will be more bearable than others. Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution IV.1

recognised 'that the process of moving towards full, visible unity may entail temporary anomalies, and believes that some anomalies may be bearable when there is an agreed goal of visible unity, but that there should always be an impetus towards their resolution and, thus, towards the removal of the principal anomaly of disunity'. In reviewing various international and national agreements and proposals, IASCECER was encouraged to find that, provided there were clear commitments to when and how anomalous situations might be overcome, rather more could be considered bearable than was initially supposed (for example, see the comments on United Churches in Chapter 7). Precedent and tradition should be seen as more of a springboard to new possibilities than a constraint on innovation (though attention should be paid to the contexts of agreements and the objectives they set themselves in considering their translatability into new circumstances). Imaginative initiatives might often provide new and helpful precedents, and, provided they are carefully thought through (and here we hope that the material in this book will prove particularly useful), should be given serious positive consideration as far as possible.

It is of course the case, and should be explicitly recognised (as it was in *Called to Be One*), that lasting division within the Body of Christ is the least bearable of all ecumenical anomalies.

Though not made explicit within these principles, IASCECER recognised that humility in the face of human fallibility, and repentance for the sin of division and all that follows from it, are unavoidable and necessary elements in ecumenical processes. In our own dialogues with others, and in others' dialogues, during recent years there has been a growing willingness to make such admissions, and to address specific pains and hurts between Christian traditions – even where through history lives had been taken. Healing of memories is a necessary part of reconciliation. This was reflected in the process that led to the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, made by the Lutherans and Roman Catholics (see Chapter 8, in the Lutheran section). It is also a central issue in the work being pursued by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC on 'The Cloud of Witnesses' (see the section on Faith and Order, in Chapter 10).

The Nature of Church Unity

Inseparable from the goal, task and processes of ecumenism, is its content.

While truth and unity have sometimes been juxtaposed in the debates within the Anglican Communion, ultimately for us and for all Christians, the fullness of truth and the fullness of unity will only be found when they are found together, as 'all things' are reconciled with God in Christ (cf. Colossians 1.17-20). In responding faithfully to our vocation to be the Body of Christ, we can neither pursue unity at the expense of truth, nor truth at the expense of unity – though in this respect as in others, we may have to grapple with questions of what are bearable or unbearable anomalies.

However, what has not been negotiable in the work of IASCECER, nor should be in any part of Anglican ecumenical engagement, is the commitment to the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as 'containing all things necessary to salvation' and being the rule and ultimate standard of faith; and to the Apostles' Creed, as the baptismal symbol, and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

This echoes the first two clauses of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, to which IASCER endlessly returned in its discussions. First adopted in 1888, it was reaffirmed in 1998, Resolution IV.1, which commended ‘continuing reflection’ upon its ‘contribution to the search for the full, visible unity of the Church’, while *Called to Be One* described it as a ‘skeletal framework’. IASCER sought to pursue such reflection throughout its work. The third clause addresses the two sacraments ordained by Christ himself, Baptism and Eucharist, the theme of Chapter 4. The subject of its fourth clause can be seen as underlying IASCER’s work on Holy Orders, considered further in Chapter 5.

More than all this, by affirming the position of the Quadrilateral within its enunciation of the Principles of Anglican Ecumenical Engagement, IASCER sought to provide in a comprehensive way a considered reflection, as requested by the bishops at Lambeth in 1998, of how, in our current context, it can continue to contribute to the search for the full visible unity of the Church.

Finally, however much we strive for right structures and procedures in our relationships with other Christians, they alone are not enough. We must remember that the life of the Church is always dependent upon the indwelling of God’s Spirit among us. May the Spirit direct, inspire and bless us in our ecumenical engagement, and make us a blessing to God’s world.

The Vision Before Us: The Kyoto Report of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, 2000-2008. Compiled and edited by Sarah Rowland Jones. Published by The Anglican Communion Office, London, UK

ⁱ In his Introduction to *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences 1867-88* – see References

ⁱⁱ *Indaba Reflections*, 71

ⁱⁱⁱ For example, *Indaba Reflections*, 37, 58, 67, 69, 75, 81-4.