



# Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order

*Report to ACC-18 in Accra, Ghana, 2023*

## *Letter from Chair of IASCUFO to ACC*

Dear Members of the Anglican Consultative Council,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I look forward greatly to sharing with you at the meeting of the ACC in Ghana in February 2023. With this letter, I enclose a report on the activities of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order (IASCUFO) of which I have been the Chair for nearly two years.

IASCUFO is a permanent commission of the Anglican Communion and reports to the ACC. Its brief is to advise the Instruments of Communion and member churches on matters of doctrine, ecclesiology, liturgy, canon law and ecumenical relations.

In the papers you will find accounts of the work the Commission has done over these past years, including reports on the various ecumenical dialogues between the Anglican Communion and other ecumenical partners across the world. It also gives an account of particular projects that we have done in recent years as well as some work that we have offered to do in future, to help address some of the issues we face as an Anglican Communion at present.

I would draw your attention to the enclosed report Anglican Communion: Unity, Faith & Order, 2008-2022, which presents a useful summary of all the work of IASCUFO since its inception in 2008.

I am deeply grateful to the staff of the Anglican Communion Office for their support of the work of the Commission over recent years, in particular Neil Vigers, Stephen Spencer, Will Adam (the former Director of Unity, Faith and Order) and Christopher Wells (the new occupant of that post).

I pray for good discussion of these papers and interaction on these themes when we meet in Ghana.

With very best wishes in the love of Christ,

**Bishop Graham Tomlin**

*Director, Centre for Cultural Witness, Lambeth Palace*

*Chair, IASCUFO*

## 1. Introduction

The longstanding commitment of the Anglican Communion to the unity of Christ's Church, and our loyalty to one another as a global family of Anglican Christians, flow from the same source: the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ that his disciples may be one, so that the world may believe (John 17.21). The Anglican Communion's vocation to Christian unity was expressed in the "Four Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism" adopted by ACC-14 in 2009:

1. *The Goal*: the full organic unity of the Church
2. *The Task*: recognising and receiving the Church in one another
3. *The Process*: unity by stages
4. *The Content*: common faith, sacraments and ministry

The Unity, Faith and Order work of the Anglican Communion encompasses both the 'inter-Anglican' and wider ecumenical work with which our Communion has been engaged in a focused way since at least 1867, with much earlier roots in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Reformation and before.

As Anglicans reflect on the gift and call of communion with one another amid real disagreements and divisions, we can find strength and encouragement in the storehouse of ecumenical riches we have amassed over the decades. Our longstanding devotion to unity, and our commitment to telling the truth, reminds us of who we are in Christ, and who we can become, by God's grace.

## 2. Covid and its effect on the life of Anglican Communion Commissions

Soon after ACC-17 the world was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, and all Churches had to find new ways to work and maintain their lives and ministries. The theological dialogues and standing commissions of the Communion were unable to meet face-to-face and missed two or three annual gatherings. Meeting online helped us to stay in touch, but substantial work was largely postponed, to resume from May 2022, with several new and refreshed bilateral dialogues.

## 3. Global Christianity from ACC-17 to ACC-18

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2021 marked an explosion of simmering geopolitical tension that had been building in the region. Orthodox Christianity finds itself enmeshed in these places and peoples, in the lives of ordinary Russians and Ukrainians and their leaders. Already in 2018, the Patriarch of Moscow broke with the Patriarch of Constantinople over the granting of independence to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The Anglican Communion has long had the deepest respect for the Orthodox Churches and longs for *their* unity, as well as the unity of all Christians.

Meanwhile, the Roman Catholic Church continues to pursue a most remarkable set of reforms, as the hallmark of Pope Francis's pontificate: a call to Synodality, not only for Catholics but for the whole Church. Anticipated in many ways by the ground-breaking work of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, especially in its 1999 text *Gift of Authority*, all Christians and churches are called to *walk together* (syn-hodos), which

involves consultation and agreement, both at the local and at regional and international levels. Anglicans remain closely aligned with our Catholic friends in this work, and we are learning from them even as we seek to walk alongside them and one another.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) held its 11<sup>th</sup> Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 2022 with the theme 'Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.' Many Anglican Churches participated amid a great and inspiring gathering of other Christians. As the WCC carries forward its venerable work of multilateral Christian cooperation, Anglicans hold a special place of historic leadership and encouragement, and could contribute much more, drawing on our experience of learning to walk together as a global communion.

#### **4. Ecumenical Dialogues of the Anglican Communion from ACC-16 to ACC-17**

The Anglican Communion's bilateral dialogues with other Christian denominations continue to imagine new ways to enact the unity for which Christ prayed, ways that may redound to our own benefit as we reflect on the ways and means of visible communion. Some of our dialogues focus on historic theological and more recent ethical questions that not only divide churches from one another but also denominations from themselves. Other dialogues seek to advance unity through shared mission, drawing on the 'Life and Work' strand of the historic Ecumenical Movement.

##### **α. Theological dialogues**

##### **Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC III)**

The third phase of ARCIC began in 2009 with the mandate to promote the reception of the work of ARCIC II, to reflect on the church as Communion, local and universal, and to reflect together how in communion the local and universal Church come to discern right ethical teaching. The work of ARCIC II was completed in the autumn of 2016, and presented to the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury. ARCIC III completed its first agreed statement in 2017, [Walking Together on the Way: Learning to be the Church—Local, Regional and Universal](#).

ARCIC III's agenda has now shifted to a reflection on ethical issues, and how Anglicans and Roman Catholics discern ethical teaching. It is hoped that an agreed statement may be published after the meeting in 2024.

ARCIC does not have a resolution for ACC-18.

##### **Anglican-Oriental Orthodox International Commission (AOOIC)**

Since 2017, the AOOIC has been studying the nature of authority in the Church, and in 2023 the commission completed the agreed statement on [The Inheritance of Ecumenical Councils](#).

- ACC-18 will be asked to welcome this text and commend it to the Churches of the Anglican Communion for study and response.

The next area to be studied will be our understanding of apostolic succession, and

the reception of clergy when they move from one tradition to another.

### **International Anglican-Reformed Dialogue (IRAD)**

The dialogue finished its work with the 2020 publication of the Agreed Statement [Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling](#).

- ACC-18 will be asked to welcome this text and commend it to the Churches of the Anglican Communion for study and response.

### **International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue (ICAOTD)**

The 2015 agreed statement *In the Image and Likeness of God: A Hope Filled Anthropology* has formed the foundation for a series of statements considering the ethical implications of what we believe about the human person. In 2020 the Commission published a significant study on ecology: [Stewards of Creation: The Canterbury Statement](#). [Cuidadores/as de la Creación: Una ecología de esperaranzar](#). [Cuidadores/as da Criação: Uma Ecologia de Esperançar](#). [Gardiens de la Création :Une Écologie Pleine d'Espérance](#)

In 2023, the Commission published an Agreed Statement, [Dying Well, Living Well: Our Sure and Certain Hope](#).

- ACC-18 will be asked to welcome this text and commend it to the Churches of the Anglican Communion for study and response.

## **β. Unity and Mission dialogues**

### **International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission ([IARCCUM](#))**

IARCCUM is an episcopal commission of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops across the globe who promote the reception of the work of ARCIC and joint work in mission between the churches of the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church. In October 2016 the IARCCUM bishops met in Canterbury and Rome, where they were commissioned by the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury for the work of common mission and unity together across the Church. A second such summit is being planned for January 2023, at which pairs of regional bishops will convene in Rome and move to Canterbury in a spiritual pilgrimage of friendship and mission.

### **Anglican-Lutheran International Commission on Unity and Mission**

Established to monitor, coordinate and promote relationships between Anglicans and Lutherans around the world, ALICC concluded its mandate after ACC-16. On ALICC's recommendation, the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran World Federation agreed to a revised body, the Anglican-Lutheran International Commission on Unity and Mission (ALICUM). The new body will be a dispersed global commission of Anglican and Lutheran bishops who will engage each other in mission and deepen the bonds of unity. The first meeting will be in March 2023.

### **Anglican-Old Catholic International Co-ordinating Council (AOCICC)**

Because Anglicans and Old Catholics enjoy a relationship of full communion, AOCICC explores the nature and meaning of what we share, and coordinates mission between the two families of churches in Europe.

A new membership of the Council was appointed and met in 2022 in Amersfoort.

## 5. Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order (IASCUFO) is a unique forum that harvests the riches of inter-Anglican and ecumenical dialogue, and places them in dialogue with one another.

The Commission brings together work done previously by the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission (IATDC), the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (IASCER), and the Windsor Continuation Group. The Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion established IASCUFO in November 2008, with the following mandate:

- To promote the deepening of Communion between the Churches of the Anglican Communion, and between those Churches and the other churches and traditions of the Christian oikumene;
- To advise the provinces and the Instruments of Communion on all questions of ecumenical engagement, proposals for national, regional or international ecumenical agreement or schemes of cooperation and unity, as well as on questions touching Anglican Faith and Order;
- To review developments in the areas of faith, order or unity in the Anglican Communion and among ecumenical partners, and to give advice to the Churches of the Anglican Communion or to the Instruments of Communion upon them, with the intention to promote common understanding, consistency, and convergence both in Anglican Communion affairs and in ecumenical engagement;
- To assist any Province with the assessment of new proposals in the areas of Unity, Faith and Order as requested.

IASCUFO has met yearly to reflect on life in the Anglican Communion. It advises the Instruments of Communion and advises the provincial churches on their ecumenical relationships.

IASCUFO published numbers 3 and 4 in its series of Faith and Order Papers, with the title [\*God So Loved the World. Paper 3, Created in the Image and Likeness of God: The Divine Gift and Call to Humanity\*](#), develops a theological anthropology that may serve as a foundation for considering practical questions of Christian living. Paper 4, *God's Sovereignty and Our Salvation*, revisits the question of God's grace, who may be saved, and the mystery of election, as a contribution to Anglican thinking about the Church, visible and invisible.

- ACC-18 will be asked to consider a resolution that publication be commended to the Churches of the Communion.

IASCUFO has written a compendium harvesting all significant faith and order texts of

relevance to the life of the Anglican Communion since the meeting of The Lambeth Conference in 2008. [Anglican Communion: Unity, Faith & Order, 2008 to 2022](#) is an electronic text with hyperlinks, rather than a printed book. A comprehensive account to date, it may easily be updated.

- ACC-18 will be asked to consider a resolution that publication be commended to the Churches of the Communion.

Finally, IASCUFO has embarked on a faith and order project in direct service of the Anglican Communion, provisionally entitled '[Good Differentiation.](#)' What is communion for Anglicans? Can we still speak about the faith and order that we share? And how might decisions rightly be made, that protect our proper diversity without deepening our divisions? Presuming we are called to a communion with one another, how might that take shape, and how can we protect the conscience of those with whom we disagree? If we seek to walk together, can we also respect one another's needs for differentiation when conscience demands?

- ACC-18 will be asked to consider a resolution welcoming the proposed trajectory of IASCUFO's exploration of structure and decision-making in the Anglican Communion, as central to our call to be one.

## INTERNATIONAL ANGLICAN LITURGICAL CONSULTATION: REPORT TO ACC18

The International Anglican Liturgical Consultation (IALC) is the official network for liturgy of the Anglican Communion. It exists:

- to promote the deepening of communion between the Churches of the Anglican Communion by renewing its life of liturgy and prayer as integral to the mission of the Church;
- to advise the Provinces and the Instruments of Communion on questions of liturgy and common prayer and to encourage and support conversation between the provinces on questions touching on Anglican liturgical theology and practice;
- to review developments in liturgical formation and practice in the Anglican Communion and among ecumenical partners, and to give advice upon them to the Provinces and the Instruments of Communion, with the intention to promote common understanding, consistency and coherence, both within the Anglican Communion and in ecumenical engagement;
- to assist any Province with new proposals in the areas of liturgical formation, development and practice; and
- to report the scope and results of its work to the Anglican Consultative Council.

The membership of IALC consists of:

- members of the Provincial Liturgical Commissions
- those nominated by the Provinces
- Anglican members of [Societas Liturgica](#)

The Steering Committee, elected by members of IALC, has regular online meetings, convened by the Revd Neil Vigers, to oversee the work of the network and plan future Consultations:

- The Revd Christine Benoit (India Ocean)
- The Revd Canon Cynthia Botha – Secretary (Southern Africa)
- The Ven Dane Courtney (Australia)
- The Revd Canon Keith Griffiths – Chair (resigned August 2022) (Southern Africa)
- The Revd Canon Dr Simon Jones – Chair (from August 2022) (England)
- The Revd Chun-wai Lam (Hong Kong)
- The Revd Dr Luiz Teixeira Coelho (Brazil)
- The Revd Neil Vigers (Anglican Communion Office)

### Since ACC17

IALC held an online Consultation from 4-6 May 2021. Sixty-three members from across the Communion registered, a significant increase to pre-pandemic gatherings. On each



of the three days there were two contact hours. Through individual presentations, group work and plenary sessions, the following topics were considered:

- Reflections on Anglican Liturgy during the Covid-19 pandemic;
- The Liturgical Formation of Bishops (subsequently folded into *The Liturgical Formation of All the Baptized*, begun in Hong Kong, 2020);
- An Anglican Communion Calendar, at the request of the Secretary General

At the end of the Consultation three groups were formed to continue each strand of work. The first focussed particularly on the liturgical and theological issues raised by online eucharists. The work of the second group fed into an IALC seminar on liturgical formation at last year's Lambeth Conference at which bishops were invited to comment on the content. Bishop Bismark Avokaya (South Sudan) chaired the seminar, Neil Vigers (ACO) outlined the work of IALC, and Simon Jones (England) presented the material and led the subsequent conversation. The Eucharistic Prayer drafted by IALC in Hong Kong (2020) was used at the Opening and Closing Eucharists in Canterbury Cathedral.

ACC-18 is asked to consider three resolutions associated with the three strands of IALC's work, now known by the titles of their texts:

- [\*The Liturgical Formation of all the Baptized\*](#)
- [\*Virtual Communion and the Covid-19 Pandemic\*](#)
- [\*An Anglican Communion Calendar\*](#)

### **Future Plans**

Almost thirty years on from the publication of the IALC statement on the Eucharist, the recommendations of which greatly influenced the revision of the eucharistic rites of many provinces, the Steering Committee plans to hold two Consultations to revisit this work. In the light of developments in liturgical scholarship, the Covid-19 pandemic, cultural shifts and diversity, and the increasing variety of contexts in which the Eucharist is celebrated, a new statement will propose future revisions and practice across the Communion. The first meeting will take place online on 3 and 4 May 2023, leading to a full, in-person Consultation in February 2024 in Seoul, South Korea. The Steering Committee is seeking to raise money for IALC's Bursary Fund to enable the widest possible representation of Provinces.

Simon Jones  
*Chair, International Anglican Liturgical Consultation*  
*January 2023*

## Report of the Anglican Communion Legal Advisors' Network to the ACC 2023

The mission of the Church is carried out through its own ordered structures and takes place in territories governed by diverse civic legal systems. In every place, high quality legal advice facilitates every dimension of mission.

The Legal Advisors' Network was established in 2002 following a resolution at ACC-12 to produce a statement of shared canonical principles and to examine shared legal problems. It produced in 2008 *The Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion*.

More recently it has fallen into abeyance, and the work of revising the *Principles* for 2022 was carried out jointly by the Cardiff Centre for Law and Religion, the Ecclesiastical Law Society, and the ACO. A report on this revision process, made to the ACC standing committee, is included below.

Members are encouraged to review the revised [Principles of Canon Law](#).

### The future

The need for a Legal Advisors' Network is greater than ever, to help provinces of the Communion assist one another with legal questions that arise. The energy and enthusiasm around the Principles revision presents an opportunity for a renewal of the Network and a celebration of an aspect of our unity. Our proposed resolutions to ACC-18 reflect this hope, and are based on the resolutions from ACC-12 and ACC-14.

#### This Anglican Consultative Council

- Thanks the Cardiff Centre for Law and Religion, the Ecclesiastical Law Society, and all those involved in producing the 2022 revision of the *Principles*, launched at the Lambeth Conference 2022;
- Commends the *Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion 2022* for study in every Province.

#### This Anglican Consultative Council

- Welcomes the renewal of the Network of Anglican Legal Advisors;
- Encourages the Network to study the Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion;
- Invites the Network to examine shared legal problems and possible solutions, and to provide reports to IASCUFO and the Anglican Consultative Council.

Respectfully Submitted

The Revd Russell Dewhurst, Fellow of the Centre for Law and Religion, Cardiff University

The Ven Alan T Perry, General Secretary, Anglican Church of Canada

Dear members of the ACC standing committee,

It was agreed that those involved in the second edition of *The Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion* would update the Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council on the launch and initial reception of the revised *Principles*.

### Background

While each church in the Anglican Communion is autonomous and governed according to its own legal system, there are common principles of canon law, which have been factually established by studying the law of the churches.

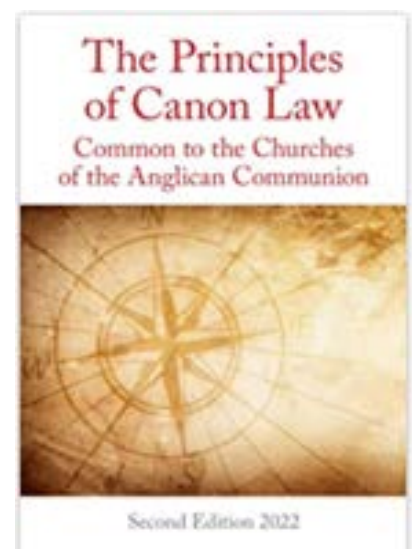
Meeting in Canterbury 2002, the Primates ‘recognized that the unwritten law common to the churches of the Communion and expressed as shared principles of canon law may be understood to constitute a fifth “instrument of unity” and endorsed the production of a draft statement of principles. This decision was based on the work of the legal academic Professor Norman Doe. Following extended study and work by an international network of legal advisors, in 2008 the Anglican Communion Office published *The Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion*, which was launched at the Lambeth Conference of that year. In 2009 the Anglican Consultative Council commended *The Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion* for study in every province (Resolution 14.20).

Since then, *Principles* has been cited in cases and in academic commentary, used by provinces developing their own constitutions and canons, and employed ecumenically, not least by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) which commended the *Principles* in its recent publication, *Walking together on the Way*.

### The Production of a Second Edition

As churches have continued to legislate, the *Principles* stood in need of updating, and consequently plans for a second edition were set in train.

The production of the second edition was a joint project overseen by the Centre for Law and Religion at Cardiff University School of Law and Politics, the Ecclesiastical Law Society, and the Anglican Consultative Council. The CLR oversaw the work of drafting and revision; the ELS organized the initial reading groups and provided sponsorship; the ACC held the copyright and provided the copy editing and typesetting expertise co-ordinated by Neil Vigers.



Through the initial reading groups, the revision committee, and the consultation with provinces, over seventy canon lawyers across the Communion were involved. Input was received from provinces including Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia; Australia; Burundi; Canada; Central Africa; Ceylon; England; Hong Kong; Wales; West Africa; Scotland; Southern Africa; Sudan; the USA; and the West Indies.



The second edition was launched at the Lambeth Conference in August 2022, hosted by the Rt Revd Vicentia Kgabe, Bishop of Lesotho in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. The bishops attending expressed great interest in the application of the *Principles* to their dioceses and provinces. We were particularly grateful to the Archbishop of Canterbury for providing a foreword.

### Initial Reception of the Second Edition

The methodology of the second edition was the subject of a paper by Norman Doe and Russell Dewhurst, presented to the *Colloquium of Anglican and Roman Catholic Canon Lawyers* meeting in Rome in October 2022. The *Principles* are regularly used by the Anglican team of the colloquium. The growing canonical dimension of ecumenism is well-served by the *Principles*, which allow Anglicans to point to their commonly-held canonical basis.

At the conference celebrating 30 years of the LLM in Canon Law at Cardiff University Law School in October 2022, a panel discussed the *Principles*, including papers from the Rt Revd Christopher Hill (ARCIC) and the Ven Alan Perry (General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Canada). At the same conference, a panel led by ecumenist Dr Paul Goodliff traced the influence of the *Principles on the Principles of Christian Law* project, presented to the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Karlsruhe in August 2022. In the teaching of the LLM course itself, the *Principles* continue to be central to the teaching of the canon law of the wider Anglican Communion.

The widely-reported 'Proposed Constitution for the Catholic Church', published by the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research, August 2022, 'takes into account... in particular, the official "Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion"'.

Papers and reviews of the second edition are due to be published in the coming months in the *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* (Russell Dewhurst) and the *Journal of Anglican Studies* (Christopher Hill). A page of resources to support the *Principles* is available on the Ecclesiastical Law Society website. The work of the Committee was the basis of Russell Dewhurst's presentation at the "Listening to the West" conference at the Institute for Ecumenical Studies at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome in January 2023 as part of the Synod on Synodality in the Roman Catholic Church.

## Conclusion

It has been a very fruitful experience for the Centre for Law and Religion, the Ecclesiastical Law Society, and the Anglican Consultative Council to work together on the production of this second edition. Even in the five months since the launch of the second edition, the interest and activity in academic and ecumenical circles indicates that the project continues to be of great service to the Church.

We hope that the Standing Committee might consider a call or resolution (equivalent to Resolution 14.20 made in 2008) to encourage study of the *Principles* more widely throughout the Communion.

Yours sincerely,

Russell Dewhurst, Chair of the Principles of Canon Law Revision Committee

Norman Doe, Director of the Centre for Law and Religion, Cardiff University

Elizabeth Wilson, Chair of the Ecclesiastical Law Society