

Anglicans and Old Catholics Serving in Europe

**A Report of the
Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council**

2013–2019

to the Anglican Consultative Council 17

Hong Kong April/ May 2019

and the International Bishops' Conference, Lublin

June 2019

AOCICC



Amersfoort 2013



Kilkenny 2014

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Zurich 2015



Ghent 2016

Preface by the Co-Chairs

To the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) and the International Bishops' Conference of Old Catholic Churches (IBC).

As the Co-Chairs of the AOCICC we are proud to present its report to you, members of the ACC and the IBC. We thank you for the trust you have placed in us, and we hope that over the last six busy years we have fulfilled the mandate given to us. We thank all members and staff of the Council who have enabled us to discharge our responsibilities in so fruitful and enjoyable a way. Although this is a report largely about church life in Europe, we emphasise that its content and implications have relevance far beyond the European context. It has been a most enriching experience for us to reach out across national and cultural frontiers, and to learn more of our common pilgrimage as disciples of the Lord Jesus united in the fellowship of full communion. With humility and gratitude we now offer our findings and recommendations. We hope our endeavours will encourage the continuing and enhanced work of the AOCICC as both our communions approach the centenary of the Bonn Agreement in 2031.

Bishop Michael Burrows

Bishop Dirk Jan Schoon

18 January 2019



Bonn 2017



Winchester 2018

Executive Summary

This report to the AOCICC's parent bodies tells the story of Anglican and Old Catholic relations since the historic Bonn Agreement of 1931 brought the two families of Churches into communion with each other. This relationship is global, but inevitably is focussed on continental Europe.

The report describes the changing nature of Europe, the context of the global ecumenical movement, and how both Communion take their part in the life of the Church and of the societies in which they are set.

The report

- highlights the challenges of living in communion but while maintaining independence;
- describes how the mandate to support the living out of communion has been worked out;
- tells where and when the Council has met, and the projects it has initiated and supported;
- addresses the critical challenge of safeguarding with clear suggestions for improvements;
- offers a draft new mandate for both Communion to consider.

Members of the Council 2013–2019

Anglicans

The Rt Revd Michael Burrows, Co-Chair

The Rt Revd David Hamid

The Revd Jennifer Adams-Massmann

Mrs Jennifer Knudsen

The Revd Tony Litwinski

The Revd Canon Dr Alyson Barnett-Cowan, Anglican Communion Office, Co-Secretary
2013–14

The Revd Canon Dr John Gibaut, Anglican Communion Office, Co-Secretary 2015–2018

The Revd Neil Vigers, Anglican Communion Office, Co-Secretary 2019

Old Catholics

The Rt Revd Dr Dirk Jan Schoon, Co-Chair

The Revd Professor Dr David R Holeton (present at the Kilkenny meeting 2014)

The Revd Professor Dr Angela Berlis 2013–2019

The Revd Lars Simpson, Co-Secretary 2014–2019

The Rt Revd Dr Heinz Lederleitner 2013–2016

The Revd ThDr. Petr Jan Vinš 2017–2019

Anglican members of the Council are appointed by the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Old Catholic members are appointed by the International Bishops' Conference.



Prague 2019

a **Bonn 1931: Belonging together**

The mandate (see p 14) and work of the present AOCICC rest firmly on the shoulders of its predecessors, and more precisely, the 2011 AOCICC Agreed Statement, *Belonging together in Europe: A joint statement on aspects of ecclesiology and mission*.¹ That statement is itself a reflection on the meaning of the Bonn Agreement of 1931.² This foundational text succinctly states:

1. Each Communion recognises the Catholicity and independence of the other, and maintains its own.
2. Each Communion agrees to admit members of the other Communion to participate in the Sacraments.
3. Intercommunion does not require from either Communion the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the Christian Faith.

Significantly, at its 2017 meeting, the AOCICC launched its own text, *Anglicans and Old Catholics together in Europe*—a distillation of the issues raised in *Belonging together in Europe*—at the Hotel Königshof in Bonn, Germany, overlooking the Rhine. It was in this historic location that the text of the Bonn Agreement between Anglicans and Old Catholics was signed on 2 July 1931. In the following years the Bonn Agreement was received by the Old Catholic bishops united in the International Bishops' Conference (1932). In 1948 the Lambeth Conference commended the agreement to all the Churches of the Anglican Communion which had not yet considered it. Thus a European initiative became an agreement for the worldwide Anglican Communion and its member Churches' relations with Old Catholic Churches.

The writers of the Bonn Agreement apparently felt no need to expand on the coherence between catholicity and independence. Starting from the relationship of ecclesial communion as it is experienced by Anglicans and Old Catholics in Europe, *Belonging together in Europe* was intended 'to clarify the basis and scope of the relationship now existing between the Churches of the Anglican Communion and of the Union of Utrecht, in order to explore and chart the possibility of further development in cooperation and common life, especially on the continent of Europe'.

This report outlines how the AOCICC has served this intention in its conversations and activities and, most importantly, how it has identified where Anglicans and Old Catholics have engaged one another in cooperation, mission, and common life.

b The context of Europe: Walking together in an evolving Europe

Anglicans and Old Catholics walking together in Europe today have to take account of the ways in which Europe is rapidly evolving.

Very few would doubt that Europe is marching steadily towards a post-Christian and increasingly secularised society. Research in recent years has demonstrated that the majority of young people in most European countries do not follow any religion at all. Many young Europeans who have been baptised seldom darken the doors of a church again. It seems that our religious identities are not being passed down from generation to generation any more. Our Churches are faced with living the mission of Christ in this rapidly changing context.

Furthermore, Europe is affected by the mass movement of peoples around the world, whether conventional refugees or migrants seeking economic security. Some are fleeing from zones of conflict. Others are on the move to escape impoverishment, hopelessness, hunger, thirst and disease, driven by unprecedented population growth and exacerbated by climate change. Since the start of the mandate of this AOCICC, over one million asylum seekers, largely from Syria and other countries in the Middle East, have travelled through Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan countries, and settled in Germany and other northern European lands. More recently migration has increased across the Mediterranean, from North Africa to Malta, to Italy and to Spain. Nine out of ten of those migrants are African, mostly from the parched sub-Saharan. The Churches in Europe serve the new arrivals, offering welcome and solidarity and assisting with integration and settlement. Our calling is to serve the stranger and sojourner, while ministering in a climate that in many places is becoming increasingly xenophobic towards migrants, and when even efforts to save lives at sea may be met at times with a certain hostility by governments. In some countries there is a fear of a dilution of 'Christian heritage' by the influx of newcomers, many of whom are of Muslim background. Even Pope Francis has felt the need to remind Europeans that, 'We should not be scared about the aspect of integration of cultures, because Europe was formed by a continuous integration of cultures, of so many cultures'.

On 24 June 2016 Europeans awoke to the news of the outcome of the UK referendum, to realise that the electorate of that country had voted to leave the EU. At the time of writing this report, uncertainty remains on just about every aspect of Brexit. Possible very serious situations related to borders in Ireland and Gibraltar are looming. Anglican Churches, with their roots in the UK and Ireland, are faced with the challenge of explaining to their continental European sister Churches that Brexit is not a rejection of European bonds of communion and friendship. Indeed, in the face of this political growing apart and fragmentation, this is a time when even greater solidarity and visible signs of communion are needed among Anglicans and Old Catholics. All our churches, whether their homeland is on the continent or on the off-shore islands, are *European* churches, and we share a common heritage and deep roots as Western Christians.

c The context of the ecumenical movement

The Anglican–Old Catholic relationship of full communion needs to be seen within the wider context of the contemporary ecumenical movement. The AOCICC has worked within a context styled by some as the ‘Winter of Ecumenism’. Ecumenical progress is patently not what was hoped for from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s. The united and uniting church expression of ecumenism has waned. New church-dividing issues have emerged around the ordination of women, and new questions on Christian ethics which today focus on human sexuality. There are new ruptures within traditions, as the Anglican Communion experiences in painful and public ways.

And yet, the ecumenical movement continues, in unexpected ways. The united church model, the dominant model until the mid-20th century, has given way to the model of full communion. Anglicans and Old Catholics, however, anticipated the relationship of full communion, reflected in the original genius of the Bonn Agreement. Old Catholic and Anglican ecumenical collaboration reaches back to the 19th century and is inspired by models of restored communion, based on the paradigm of the common ground of the ancient church as it was formulated by Ignaz von Döllinger in 1872 and widely received. In the 20th century, before the entry of the Roman Catholic Church into the modern ecumenical movement, the relationship between Anglicans and Old Catholics continued within the framework of a ‘wider episcopal fellowship’. From an Old Catholic point of view this fellowship encompasses certain Churches in the Catholic tradition. In this way Old Catholics were inspired by the Anglicans to be able to recognise the catholicity of the Church of Sweden, which led in 2016 to a relationship of communion between this Church and the Union of Utrecht.

The theological dialogues at the bilateral and multilateral levels continue to create new contexts in which Churches are invited to draw closer to one another. Recent ecumenical methods drawn from ‘receptive ecumenism’ or ‘differentiated consensus’ (*differenzierter Konsens*) stimulate the appreciation of the other.

Ecumenical ecclesiology has overwhelmingly shaped an understanding of the ‘Church as Communion’, in the biblical sense of *koinonia*. This renewed framework insists that by Christ, in Christ, and with Christ, we have never been completely out of communion with one another. We celebrate those areas in our relationships where this *koinonia* flourishes. We desire that such communion be fully received by those who belong to the one Body of Christ.

The fruits of the liturgical movement have given divided Christians access to their common liturgical heritage, in ways that have enabled us to recognise and receive the ‘church’ in one another. The Receptive Ecumenism project invites a mutual ecclesial learning. The emergence of new communities—e.g., Taizé, Chemin Neuf, Focolare, Sant’Egidio, Bose and Iona—reflects and shares a genuine ecumenical vision. The presence of inter-church families achieves the very same thing. The emergence of the Global Christian Forum has brought new partners into the quest for Christian unity, specifically the Pentecostal, Neo-Pentecostal, Evangelical, and African Instituted churches into a new kind of relationship with the more traditional ecumenical churches, both those within the World Council of Churches such as the Orthodox Churches, as well as the Roman Catholic Church.

The Churches engage together in mission, especially around pressing issues of climate change, human trafficking and modern slavery, xenophobia, health care, and engagement with civil actors such as the UN and other relief and development agencies.

In short, the wide ecumenical context which the Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht inhabit is rich and vibrant.



With Bishop Malý and Cardinal Duka of Prague



Bishop Dick and Lars in Winchester Cathedral

2 The significance of the Bonn Agreement today

Within the joyful experience of their essential unity and communion, Anglicans and Old Catholics have varying experiences of living out the Bonn Agreement which raise certain questions in their context.

a An Anglican Communion perspective

The Bonn Agreement signalled for the Anglican Communion a new vision of what Christian unity could look like. The model at hand for most Anglicans at that time was that of united and uniting churches in which Anglican Churches and other Churches would enter into organic, structural unity with one another. Such was the vision of Christian unity of the 1920 Lambeth Conference's *Appeal to all Christian People*. The most outstanding example of the united church model that captured the Anglican imagination was the process that led to the creation of the Church of South India in 1947.

The Bonn Agreement signalled another vision, that of two families of churches in communion with one another, with full eucharistic hospitality, and with mutual recognition and reception of one another's ordained ministries, while remaining autonomous and independent of one another. By the 1960s, the model of united and uniting churches started to wane within the Anglican Communion's ecumenical strategy. It would be replaced by the vision of the Bonn Agreement, as is seen in the relationships of communion with the Philippine Independent Church (Iglesia Filipina Independiente) and the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar. By the late 20th century the model of full communion between churches was the goal of Anglican–Lutheran and Anglican–Methodist relationships in Europe and North America.

One of the lessons of the Bonn Agreement is that living in communion does not just happen. Rather, it must be nurtured and supported. This is the insight that gave rise to the need for the Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) in 1997. The AOCICC became the model for ecumenical relationships of the Anglican Communion such as the Anglican–Lutheran International Coordinating Committee, the Anglican–Methodist International Commission on Unity and Mission, and to some extent, the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission.

One of the great challenges of the Bonn Agreement to current Anglican–Old Catholic relationships is its opening statement: 'Each Communion recognises the Catholicity and independence of the other, and maintains its own'. In some ways this reflects the autonomous nature of provinces of the Anglican Communion. One of the insights of contemporary ecumenical ecclesiology, which tend to accent the nature and mission of the Church in terms of *koinonia*, is that communion and catholicity are not sustained by ecclesial independence. As *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* reminds us:

... the Christian community in each place shares with all the other local communities all that is essential to the life of communion. Each local church contains within it the fullness of what it is to be the Church. It is wholly Church, but not the whole Church. Thus, the local church should not be seen in isolation from but in dynamic relation with other local churches (TCTCV §32).

What is said about the relationship of local churches can be said of international global communions of churches. Ecumenical ecclesiology and experience call us beyond independence to relationships of mutual interdependence. Autonomy by definition requires another. Mutual interdependence is a challenge to the phenomenon of overlapping jurisdictions in continental Europe, not just between Anglicans and Old Catholics, but within the Anglican Communion itself, in Europe and beyond. As the Bonn Agreement became the operative model for later Anglican Communion agreements and relationships of full communion, these later relationships also inherited the lacuna in the Bonn Agreement. That is to say, whereas catholicity and independence are assumed to be compatible with one another, a fully visible life in communion and common mission requires more. As 2031 approaches, a deeper reflection on the first clause of the 1931 Bonn Agreement would be a gift to the Anglican Communion, both internally and within its global ecumenical relationships.

b An Old Catholic perspective

The Bonn Agreement of 1931 was for the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht the coming true of a restoring of the unity of the Church in a truly catholic way, and not on an ultramontane model from the late 19th century Roman Catholic Church. Unfortunately the Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe, the third party at the ecumenical talks that led up to the Bonn Agreement, could not join in due to the political developments and circumstances in the first decades of the 20th century.

For Old Catholics the experience of the existing communion is as alive in 2019 as it was in 1931. The ecclesiological model still presupposes and demands the full catholicity of the local church: that is the diocese, and the principle of the ancient church of ‘one bishop in one city’. As the Statute of the IBC in its Preamble 3.1 and 3.2 states:

Each fellowship and communion of people, which by the reconciliation in Jesus Christ and by the outpouring and the continuous work of the Holy Spirit is constituted as a unity in a given place around a bishop with the eucharist as its centre, is a complete church that carries out its tasks autonomously in that given place. ... The catholicity of each local church becomes manifest in the unity and communion with other local churches perceived in faith as being identical in their foundation in the redemptive work of the Triune God.

As the Bonn Agreement freed the Old Catholic Church from the once-felt obligation to establish an Old Catholic Church in England, its extension to all the Churches of the Anglican Communion restrains the Union of Utrecht nowadays from starting new Old Catholic Churches or recognising existing initiatives elsewhere in the world that consider themselves ‘Old Catholic’. The relationship of ecclesial communion is not a kind of practical way to have friends all over the world, but a full recognition of the local community as the manifestation of the Body of Christ. Therefore, through the Bonn Agreement Old Catholics are able to recognise Anglicans all over the world as Old Catholics, as they expect to be recognised in their countries to be representative of the Anglicans.

Since 1931 the communion between Old Catholics and Anglicans has survived many changes. In an increasingly globalizing world, with the presence of diaspora churches, it seems that Old Catholics will experience a challenge in keeping up their ecclesiology with its emphasis on the catholicity of the local church, which is relatively independent and at the same time mutually

interdependent. As this seems to be the situation in all European countries and constitutes a major challenge for the European Union as a whole, the ecclesial communion based on the Bonn Agreement can and should help not only Old Catholics and Anglicans but all citizens in this part of the world to look for a truly human society.



Kilkenny 2014

The long-standing relationship of communion between the Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht, established in 1931, flourished for decades without any particular instrument to serve that relationship. Visits, visible sharing in sacramental fellowship, occasional mutual participation in episcopal ordinations, active networking of individuals from both communions in the various St Willibrord societies in different countries, and parish twinings, were just some signs of the healthy nature of the relationship.

Meanwhile, remarkable ecumenical progress was being made in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in North America and in Europe where Anglicans and Lutherans, in various distinct agreements, Porvoo (British Isles/Ireland/Nordic and Baltic regions), Concordat (USA) or Waterloo (Canada), were moving towards or establishing relations of full communion. It became common in such dialogues for the Churches to embrace a fuller portrait of what visible communion means than Anglicans and Old Catholics had agreed in the clearly sufficient but very succinct Bonn Agreement. The question arose about whether there was more to be done to 'fill out' the implications of our communion of Churches, and in particular to see how our Churches could take decisions together and take counsel together, as part of our common life in communion within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Anglicans and Old Catholics were aware that the discussions which led to the Bonn Agreement were originally hoped to be trilateral Anglican–Old Catholic–Orthodox. Later, wider ecumenical engagement, such as the Anglican–Lutheran dialogue and Old Catholic–Orthodox dialogues, raised new and interesting questions for the Anglican–Old Catholic communion established at Bonn, for instance the meaning of the laying on of hands at episcopal consecrations where only some of the bishops were in communion with each other.

Towards the end of 1997 the Rt Revd Jonathan Gledhill, then Bishop of Southampton, and Canon David Hamid, then the Anglican Communion's Director of Ecumenical Affairs, were asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council to consult with the International Bishops' Conference about a possible way for the Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht to deepen the long-standing relationship established in 1931. After meetings in Amersfoort with Archbishop Antonius Jan Glazemaker, then Archbishop of Utrecht, and the other Old Catholic bishops of the IBC, it was agreed to establish an Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council.

The 1998 Lambeth Conference endorsed the formation of the AOCICC. The first official meeting was held in Frankfurt later that year under the co-chairmanship of Bishop Gledhill and Bishop Joachim Vobbe (Old Catholic, Germany). The membership came from England, Germany, Switzerland, Poland, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the USA. Canon David Hamid and Dr Thaddäus Schnitker (Old Catholic, Germany) were the first co-secretaries. (Due to timing of their meetings the IBC had to wait until 1999 to confirm the Old Catholic membership.) The presence of a member from the USA was significant to underline the worldwide, and not only European, implications of the communion established by the Bonn Agreement.

The choice of the name 'Council' for this body was important. It underlined that this was not an ecumenical dialogue commission. The churches represented at the AOCICC were already in

communion. It was felt strongly that no further dialogue on points of doctrine was required, as the *communio in sacris* was achieved. Nevertheless, the Churches did need to give expression to a dimension of their full communion which until that point was not evident, i.e. joint consideration and decision-making to further their common mission and deepen the expression of their common life. Significantly for both Anglicans and Old Catholics, this was the first such 'council' of churches in communion (beyond their own communion family, of course) in which either partner had participated.

Some principles for the functioning of the Council were established in the early meetings. It was to operate bilingually, in German and English, with translation provided for non-bilingual members. (The earlier days of the Council were more functionally bilingual than the present situation, where meetings are held in English. It should also be recognised that even working in German and English meant that Polish, and to a lesser extent Czech, Old Catholics have not been able to play a more visible role over the years). The AOCICC would publish a public record of its meetings in German and English, and maintain a confidential *Aide-Mémoire* (in English only) for the use of the Council membership. The lines of accountability were clear from the start and the Council has reported regularly to the parent authorities, the ACC and the IBC, and has followed the agenda set by the three mandates to date.

Shortly after the formation of the Council, in spring 2000, an important meeting was held in Frankfurt, Germany, for the four Anglican jurisdictions on continental Europe. Bishop Joachim Vobbe, together with his chaplain Angela Berlis, joined the meeting as observers. At that time the issue of overlapping jurisdictions was seen mainly as an Anglican problem. A wider solution was proposed for the first time giving consideration to Old Catholic (and Porvoo) jurisdictions and recommending one ordinary bishop for each country, with auxiliaries where required to attend to ethnic and linguistic groups. Unfortunately, this ground-breaking proposal could not be agreed upon. Nevertheless, the principles behind it are still considered to be of value. For instance, Bishop Vobbe later adopted a partial solution by appointing his fellow Anglican bishops as assistant bishops, who appointed him to a similar position in their dioceses. While from an ecclesiological point of view these solutions were less satisfactory than the global plan presented at Frankfurt, they nevertheless signalled the good spirit in which Anglicans and Old Catholics act together and towards each other.

The agenda from the very first meeting, within the framework of succeeding mandates, has always spent considerable time on some matters of common concern and interest:

- 1 The anomaly of overlapping and parallel jurisdictions.
- 2 The communion implications of Anglican and Old Catholic dialogues. Old Catholics were particularly keen on Anglican theological consistency in the Porvoo, Meissen, and Concordat agreements with Lutherans (including the significance of the laying on of hands), and Anglicans very interested in the findings of Old Catholic–Orthodox agreement dialogue about the place of women in the Church. It is significant that a recommendation of the AOCICC that an Old Catholic observer be invited to the Anglican–Lutheran International Commission, to assist with matters of ecumenical consistency, was acted upon by Anglicans and Lutherans.

- 3 The preparation of a more comprehensive statement on ecclesiology and mission (*Belonging together in Europe*), and promoting its reception through theological conferences and bodies.
- 4 The reflection on the Anglican and Old Catholic responses to the document *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*.
- 5 Regular reflection on the everyday realities of church life in the local church, sharing the experience of being minority churches in an increasingly secularised Europe.
- 6 The use of surveys (three to date) and practical research on collaboration on the European continent.
- 7 Finding ways to act together as one ‘church family’, through common witness and mission, joint projects and initiatives, frequent joint communication and events to get to know our Anglican or Old Catholic neighbour, facing together as Churches the challenges of secularisation in Europe and elsewhere. It should be noted that through AOCICC impetus, the Conference of European Churches subsequently began to treat Anglican and Old Catholic Church members as part of the one family.

The AOCICC has enabled and fostered a deep process of learning from each other, including reflection about the primary role of the AOCICC—whether it is a theological commission or a body working on the practicalities of church life.

From the start it was considered essential that the Council should meet in different locations where the members could experience something of the local Church life and culture, and interact with local Christian communities. This has been an enriching learning experience over the years. The meetings were from the start grounded in prayer, and central to every meeting has been a joyful and thankful celebration of the Eucharist, underlining the communion we share.

4

Outworking of the AOCICC mandate

a The AOCICC's work achieved 2013–2019

The mandate of the AOCICC was renewed in 2013 and contained six core tasks, agreed upon by the Anglican Consultative Council and the International Bishops' Conference:

- i. To continue to explore the nature and meaning of our communion.
- ii. To promote knowledge of our churches and their relationship.
- iii. To assist the annual meeting of Old Catholic and Anglican bishops in Europe to develop a common definition and understanding of shared mission and coordinated oversight for their work.
- iv. To explore the possibility of establishing a representative body to oversee relationships in Europe.
- v. To advise on the establishment of appropriate instruments and concrete proposals for joint initiatives in mission work in continental Europe.
- vi. To review the consistency of ecumenical agreements and dialogues of the Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht.

Between 2013 and 2019 the AOCICC met once a year³, with Anglican and Old Catholic dioceses hosting alternately.

- 13–16 November 2013 in Amersfoort, the Netherlands
- 27–30 August 2014 in Kilkenny, Ireland
- 26–30 May 2015 in Zurich, Switzerland
- 7–11 June 2016 in Ghent, Belgium
- 4–8 July 2017 in Königswinter, Germany
- 22–26 May 2018 in Winchester, United Kingdom
- 16–19 January 2019 in Prague, Czech Republic

The work of each meeting included updating each other about developments within each Communion, as well as the bilateral and multilateral ecumenical relationships in which both Communions are engaged. Particularly enriching were the many opportunities to encounter local Anglican and Old Catholic communities for worship and fellowship.

b. Mandate i: ‘To continue to explore the nature and meaning of our communion’

To fulfil this aspect of the mandate, the Council initiated or participated in several events and engaged in reflection for its further work.

1 Planning the centenary of the Bonn Agreement

The Council is highly aware that in 2031 the centenary of the Bonn Agreement will be celebrated. The signing of this Agreement in the political situation of 1931 was a hopeful and courageous step at the heart of Europe, bringing unity between people who would soon be divided by war.

It will be important that the AOCICC, in its next mandate, plans well for 2031. There will need to be events, liturgies and conferences focussed no doubt on the Agreement itself. In anticipation of this, Council members at their 2017 meeting found great joy in visiting the hotel in Bonn by the banks of the Rhine where the original Agreement – short and handwritten on a single page – had been signed.

2031 will be an important time to assess the legacy and continuing potential of the Bonn Agreement. It offered a prototype and a method for other similar agreements between churches aspiring to enter into communion; it also challenges Anglicans and Old Catholics themselves to explore and live out what it means to be in communion today. Thus, the principles of the Bonn Agreement have already led to communion between Anglican Churches and the Mar Thoma Church and the Iglesia Filipina Independiente and form the basis of growing communion between Old Catholic Churches and those Asian churches.

Nevertheless, the Europe of our time makes many demands on its Christian citizens. While circumstances are radically different from those prevailing in the 1930s and international communications have been transformed beyond measure, Europe is still a place of great uncertainty and full of fault-lines. Anglicans and Old Catholics have much to do together ‘to give a soul’ (a famous phrase of Jacques Delors) to today’s Europe, and they should not be hindered in their mission by unnecessary anomalies in their own well-established and generally confident relationship.

2 Presentation at the celebration of 50 years of communion between the Lusitanian Church, the Spanish Episcopal Reformed Church, and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht

On 26 and 27 June 2015, the Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church of Portugal held a conference to celebrate 50 years of communion between the Lusitanian Church, the Spanish Episcopal Reformed Church, and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht.⁴ Council member Jennifer Knudsen was invited to attend the conference at St Paul’s Cathedral in Lisbon and to give a presentation on the current work of the AOCICC. She greatly appreciated the warm hospitality of the Lusitanian Church and of Bishop Jorge Pina de Cabral in particular.

Ms Knudsen’s presentation focussed on the role of the AOCICC in Anglican–Old Catholic relations, an outline of the *Belonging together in Europe* statement of 2011, an overview of the

Council's brochure and survey, and the preparations for the youth pilgrimage to Echternach, Luxembourg, held in 2017, in which youth from both the Spanish and the Portuguese Churches participated.

Although not specifically part of the work of the AOCICC, the Council supported various activities and was informed in its work by the following conferences, initiatives and actions taking place which continue to deepen the relationship between Anglicans and Old Catholics.

3 Anglican–Old Catholic Theologians Conference

The Anglican–Old Catholic Theologians Conferences were re-established in 2005. They are held every five years. The second conference (or 16th in the older pattern) was held in Neustadt in 2011, with the theme 'Ecclesiology and Mission in Today's Europe'. Its fruits were published in the *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* (Bern, Switzerland, 2012, www.ikz.unibe.ch), edited by Paul Avis and Angela Berlis. This conference dealt with the 'Joint Statement on Aspects of Ecclesiology', the theological text *Belonging together in Europe*, and brought together several Anglican and Old Catholic scholars. Most members of the AOCICC attended.

The third conference in the new series was held in Exeter from 7–10 September 2015 on 'The Authority of the Churches in a Pluralist Europe. Anglican, Old Catholic, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed Perspectives'. This led to a number of articles in various publications.⁶

The 2015 conference led to another in Jena in 2017, out of which more publications followed. A publication on authority is in preparation.⁷

The *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* regularly publishes contributions by Anglican scholars or about aspects of Anglicanism, for example from the International Theologians' Conference in 2017.⁸

4 Old Catholic summer school

One of the ways in which Anglicans and Old Catholics have interacted ecumenically in recent years has been the regular Summer School in Old Catholic Theology in Its Ecumenical Context held in the Netherlands. The course is offered by the faculty of the Old Catholic Seminary (affiliated with Utrecht University) in cooperation with Utrecht Summer School.

The course has to date brought together lay and ordained students from around the globe, Old Catholics, Anglicans, Orthodox, Protestant (Calvinist/Presbyterian, Lutheran), Roman Catholics, Iglesia Filipina Independiente and the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, as well as students from beyond the churches. On average, student groups consist of 15–20 participants—approx. 125 in total so far—and Anglicans have been a valuable fixture from the start. To date, Anglicans from across the Anglican Communion have attended the summer school, coming for example from the Church of England, the Church in Wales, the Church of Ireland and The Episcopal Church (USA) and based in countries including the USA, England, Wales, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Frequently, Anglican participants have been sponsored by institutions dedicated to Anglican–Old Catholic relations, such as the Society of St Willibrord in the UK and in Switzerland.

The week-long event in the medieval episcopal city of Utrecht consists of classes and seminars that introduce students to Old Catholic ‘mainstream’ theology, ecclesiology, spirituality and praxis, history, liturgy (and liturgical art), canon law, mission and vocation in Europe.

Students are offered university credits for their successful participation in the course. Frequently, they keep in touch through the network on Facebook. In this way, an ecumenical theological network has emerged out of the summer school.

5 Anglican visiting scholarships and research at the Theological Faculty of the University of Bern

The University of Bern, Switzerland, maintains Anglican visiting scholarships and has an association of Anglican academic teachers and researchers at the Department/Institute of Old Catholic Theology.

The Old Catholic academic institution has a good relationship with wider academic Anglican theology. Professor Robert Wright (New York) is a former member of the AOCICC and is an honorary doctor of the Old Catholic Theological Faculty. Since 2011 Douglas Pratt (Waikato University, NZ) and Charlotte Methuen (Glasgow University, Scotland) have been adjunct research professors. Both have also held classes as visiting professors.

Douglas Pratt and Angela Berlis have to date organised five interreligious ecumenical conferences, titled ‘Interreligious Relations and Ecumenical Issues’.⁹ Together they also established a new series, Bern Interreligious Oecumenical Studies (BIOS).¹⁰

The Old Catholic Institute offers an Anglican visiting professorship once a year. Paul Avis, Jeremy Morris, Mark Chapman, Linda Woodhead, Charlotte Methuen and Douglas Pratt have been among the Anglican visitors to Bern since 2009, each teaching a class for one semester.

Public lectures were held by the Rt Revd David Moxon (New Zealand, then Co-Chair of the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission).

Since 2017 an Anglican doctoral student from New Zealand has been living in Bern, with Old Catholic academic funding. This is part of the internationalisation strategy of the University of Bern.

Mandate ii: ‘To promote knowledge of our churches and their relationship’

1 The brochure

At its first meeting in 2013, the AOCICC discussed in depth the document *Belonging together in Europe*. This joint statement on ecclesiology and mission had been produced by the previous Council in 2011. The Council considered how its valuable theological content could be made available to a wider audience within both Communion, and decided to produce a new glossy brochure¹¹ for Anglican and Old Catholic congregations, initially in English, that would rephrase

the key points of *Belonging together in Europe* in accessible language. The brochure was also intended to help introduce the Communion to one another with simple summaries of Anglican and Old Catholic beliefs and practices, while also encouraging cooperation between local churches.

Council members worked together closely to draft the text and to oversee the production of the brochure. The full-colour, 20-page brochure introduces the Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht and uses a question-and-answer format to summarise the main points of the *Belonging together in Europe* statement as well as photographs that illustrate life in our respective communions.

The layout and printing of the brochure, titled *Anglicans and Old Catholics together in Europe*, was coordinated in the Netherlands. Initially 2,500 copies were printed and distributed to Anglican and Old Catholic dioceses across Europe and handed out at synods and conventions.

Responses to the English-language brochure were highly positive. As a result, the Council decided to produce a German-language version as well. A print run of 4,000 copies went into production in summer 2018 and these have been distributed to Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the Czech Republic. A further 2,000 copies of the English-language brochure were printed at the same time.

Funding for brochure printing costs was kindly provided by the Society of St Willibrord in Britain and Ireland, the Willibrord-Gesellschaft in Germany, the International Bishops' Conference, and the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands.

2 Meetings: with whom did the AOCICC meet and share the story?

Part of the work of the AOCICC is to connect and interact with the local communities where it gathers for its annual meetings. To this end the Council met in different places.

2013 Amersfoort, The Netherlands

The Council hosted a lunch meeting with Archbishop Joris Vercammen, the President of the IBC, for a lively discussion with him of his perspective on the relationship of the two communions. It also met with the Rev. Dr. Peter-Ben Smit, professor at the University of Utrecht, to learn more about Old Catholic work with the Mar Thoma Church. The Council also gathered to celebrate the Eucharist at St Georgius, the local Old Catholic parish.

2014 Kilkenny, Ireland

The Kilkenny meeting of the Council in 2014 again provided fruitful opportunities to engage with the local church. In the home diocese of the Anglican Co-Chair (Cashel, Ferns and Ossory), Council members encountered much interest across the Christian spectrum in the figure of St Willibrord (died 739). Willibrord came from the north of England for training in what is now Co Carlow. There is a special relationship between the towns of Carlow and Echternach in Luxembourg, where Willibrord is buried and where large numbers of Old Catholics, Anglicans and Roman Catholics travel on pilgrimage each year during the week of Pentecost. (Echternach was of course also the venue for the youth pilgrimage organised by the AOCICC in 2017, see p 34.)

A further feature of the Irish meeting was a chance to engage with representatives of the Dublin office of the European Commission. This was an opportunity to learn of the mechanisms for discussion and consultation guaranteed to the churches under the European Treaties, and to explore how the voice of Christian citizenship is welcomed in a context often unfairly assumed to be a place of bureaucracy. In 2014 most Anglicans and Old Catholics in Europe had every reason to assume that the vision and the laws of the EU would continue to be part of their lives in the long term, and at the Kilkenny meeting the Council members were pleasantly surprised to learn of how even quite small churches could share opportunities 'to speak to power'. In the light of subsequent events, notably Brexit, there was something prophetically poignant about the Irish AOCICC/EU encounter. While it is not the role of the Council to make overtly political statements, it is a simple fact that Brexit has raised questions among many UK Anglicans who wish to work alongside fellow-Anglicans and Old Catholics in other EU states in engagement with the European Institutions, and in exploring how the European project with its traditional emphases on peace and freedom could provide a supportive context for our mission to pursue the values of the Gospel.

2015 Zurich, Switzerland

The Council engaged with several local faith communities: St Andrew's Church (Anglican, Diocese in Europe); the Augustinerkirche and the Christuskirche (Old Catholic, Christkatholische Kirche der Schweiz); the Grossmünster and the Fraumünster (Reformed, Evangelisch-reformierte Kirche Zurich); and held a dinner gathering with leaders from several of the cantonal churches. The Council also met with the Revd Antje Kirchhofer, national youth officer for the Swiss Old Catholic Church to discuss a proposal for a joint youth pilgrimage to Echternach.

2016 Ghent, Belgium

The Council hosted the Most Revd Dr Joris Vercammen, Archbishop of Utrecht; the Rt Revd Dr Robert Innes, Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe; and the Rt Revd Pierre W. Whalon, Bishop-in-Charge of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe. The three bishops and the Council engaged in a series of discussions about the relationship of the communions (see p 14) and a number of current issues. Council members celebrated the Eucharist in the Anglican tradition in the chapel of the monastery where they met; they celebrated the Eucharist in the Old Catholic tradition at St John's Anglican Church with some of its members, graciously hosted by the Revd Stephen Murray, Chaplain, and his intern, Mr James Roberts.

2017 Königswinter, Germany

The Council visited the Hotel Königshof, Bonn, the site of the official signing of the Bonn Agreement on 2 July 1931. Hotel management graciously hosted a small celebration of the event. The Council joined in an ecumenical vespers celebration at the Namen-Jesu-Kirche, the episcopal seat of the Old Catholic Church in Germany. Members also met with the Revd Richard Gardiner and locum priest the Revd John Clasper from the chaplaincy of St Boniface, Bonn, with All Saints, Cologne for a discussion of their work. Greetings were sent to Bishop Joachim Vobbe.

2018 Winchester, England

The Council held all of its liturgies in the Cathedral, joining in Morning Prayer and the Eucharist with Cathedral staff and members; it also celebrated the Eucharist in the Old Catholic tradition in the Lady Chapel. The Bishop of Winchester, the Rt Revd Tim Dakin, visited the meeting. The Dean of the Cathedral, the Very Revd Catherine Ogle and members of the Chapter hosted a tea for the Council members. And Council members enjoyed a guided tour of the Cathedral led by a team of the Cathedral's volunteer docents.

2019 Prague, Czech Republic

The Council stayed at the Břevnov Monastery in Prague and was invited to a meeting with Cardinal Dominik Duka OP, Archbishop of Prague, and Auxiliary Bishop Václav Malý at the Archbishop's palace. In addition to the Daily Office (celebrated alternatively according to the Anglican or Old Catholic tradition), the Council celebrated the Eucharist in the Old Catholic tradition at the Old Catholic Cathedral of St Lawrence in Prague, at the invitation of the Dean the Revd ThDr. Petr Jan Vinš.



Prof. Angela Berlis and Bishops Michael and Dick

c The role of the Co-Chairs

The Anglican Co-Chair

As well as the privilege of co-chairing the AOCICC itself, along with its steering committee, each of the Co-Chairs has an additional and personal role in spreading information regarding all that flows from the Bonn Agreement and in representing each Communion to the other. The Anglican Co-Chair as the official permanent representative of the Anglican Communion is always invited to the annual Old Catholic International Bishops' Conference as well as to occasional special meetings. The warmth of the hospitality received at these meetings (near Zurich in 2014, in Prague in 2015, in Cologne in 2016 and in Vienna in both 2017 and 2018) has been outstanding. Indeed, being offered such open access to the bishops' meetings in another family of churches is something never to be taken for granted. One is always truly among friends, and feels totally at home as colleagues of the Union of Utrecht consider what are often familiar issues and challenges.

The Anglican Co-Chair is also invited to participate fully in the consecration of new bishops of the Union of Utrecht, and to attend celebrations marking the expansion of its own wider relationships, for example the inauguration of full communion between Utrecht and the Church of Sweden in 2018. Similar celebrations can soon be expected in the case of the Mar Thoma Church Syrian Church of Malabar in India.

The Anglican Co-Chair was a speaker at the Anglican–Old Catholic Theologians' Conference in Exeter in 2015, and attended the Old Catholic Congresses in Utrecht in 2014 and Vienna in 2018. He also attends, as an observer, the meetings of Anglican and Old Catholic bishops ministering on the continent of Europe. One particular development which it was encouraging to observe at these meetings was the deepening relationship between the churches of the Union of Utrecht and the autonomous Anglican dioceses in Spain and Portugal. Again, it is an example of receptive learning between small national churches working in different and distant states, but facing common challenges in terms of discipleship in a changing Europe.

The Anglican Co-Chair of the AOCICC is also by custom the chair of the British and Irish Society of St Willibrord (one of a number of several such societies in a range of countries) which works on the ground to promote understanding and friendship between Anglicans and Old Catholics, and to offer practical support to suitable shared projects. The Society has enthusiastic members in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland (both North and South) and holds a Festival Service and public lecture each year on a date close to 7 November, St Willibrord's Day. The financial support of the society has enabled many to attend the Old Catholic Congresses and summer schools, made possible a number of publications, and contributed significantly for several years to the chaplaincy ministry shared by Anglicans and Old Catholics at Schiphol Airport, the Netherlands.

The Old Catholic Co-Chair

Much in the same way as the Anglican Co-Chair informs his Communion on developments within the Old Catholic Churches, the Old Catholic Co-Chair reports on Anglican matters to the Old Catholic Churches. This takes place at the annual International Bishops' Conference, at which the report of the Anglican Co-Chair is also received. Anglican Communion life is also considered at the recently started bi-annual conferences of theologians involved in Old Catholic ecumenical dialogues and meetings of the synodical boards of the Old Catholic Churches.

The Old Catholic Co-Chair is the official representative of the Churches of the Union of Utrecht to the Anglican Consultative Council. It was a great privilege for the present Co-Chair to attend the meetings in Auckland in 2012 and Lusaka in 2016, and to be invited to Hong Kong in 2019. The experience of a worldwide fellowship of churches in communion is of the utmost importance for the relatively small and sometimes too much Europe-centred Old Catholic Churches to remind them of their calling in Christ.

In 2018 the Old Catholic Co-Chair was invited to attend the General Synod of the Church of Ireland and he reported on this visit to the Old Catholic Churches. Not only the warm welcome and hospitality of the Irish Church, but also the recognition of a common understanding of the importance of mission and worship in a secular and sometimes dangerously nationalistic Europe, strengthened the bonds of communion we already have.

Each of the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht formally has its own Society of St Willibrord to promote contacts and cooperation between Old Catholics and Anglicans on a local, that is national, level. As most of the Old Catholic Churches can be considered fairly high church in liturgy and open to a liberal understanding of moral questions, possibilities of local cooperation with Anglicans depend on a common understanding in these matters. At present the Society of St Willibrord is active in Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands. The German branch contributed financially to the publication of the brochure of the AOCICC (see p 22).

Mandate iii: 'To assist the annual meeting of Old Catholic and Anglican bishops in Europe to develop a common definition and understanding of shared mission and coordinated oversight for their work'

1 AOCICC meeting with the bishops 2016

The AOCICC understands itself to be a Council – it is neither a committee nor a commission. It is not overseeing an ecumenical dialogue but rather offering support and advice in respect of a relationship of communion already long in place. The task of the AOCICC is to explore the possibilities that already exist under the Bonn Agreement and to encourage theological and practical initiatives that deepen a relationship already permanent in its intentions.

As the Council reflects on its role as the body entrusted by both Communion with the responsibility of being a guarantor of the Bonn Agreement, it has a duty to identify and encourage all that is positive, to increase awareness of all that is obligated, to celebrate what is creative, and to assist with addressing areas that may remain challenging or even problematical. The people who may

most usefully be assisted by this group of counsellors are the bishops of both Communion who, notwithstanding the warmest of personal relationships and continuing cooperation in mission, nevertheless also live in the real world of overlapping jurisdictions on mainland Europe. In order to make clear the AOCICC's willingness to be of assistance and to address issues referred to it, the Council invited the Archbishop of Utrecht, the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe and the Bishop of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe to spend time residentially at its meeting in Ghent, Belgium, in 2016. The bishops graciously agreed to come, and in a creative and mutually attentive atmosphere it was discussed how the AOCICC might best be a support and source of counsel to them in their episcopal ministries. While it was agreed that some of the initial discussions were of their nature confidential, it was clear that the bishops believed that the Ghent meeting offered a useful space for candour, questioning and charting of ways forward. From the Council's point of view, the meeting was quite remarkable as a gathering 'with one accord in one place' in an atmosphere that stimulated a great deal of fresh thinking. It was agreed that such meetings should be a regular feature of the unfolding relationships between Anglicans and Old Catholics, and that they should be a visible expression of the very purpose of the AOCICC in its service to the two Communion. It is expected that meetings might be held every two to three years, but the plan to hold a second one in Winchester in 2018 was postponed pending the appointment of a new bishop for the Convocation, and cognisant of the importance of engaging at an early stage with him or her. The Council emphasises, however, that momentum in these discussions must not be lost.

2 Safeguarding

At the request of the meeting of Anglican–Old Catholic bishops on mainland Europe, the AOCICC reflected on the issues of child abuse, the protection of vulnerable persons and safeguarding. The Council recognises the centrality and importance of safeguarding in both Communion while noting the differences in the structure and processes of each national church policy. These were highlighted at the 2017 meeting of the Anglican–Old Catholic bishops in Europe.

The discussion pointed to the urgent need to examine the various Anglican and Old Catholic policies and procedures on safeguarding across Europe. One of the signs of the full communion between our churches is the interchangeability of ministry. This is a critical area where the bishops of the Churches in communion need to exchange all relevant confidential information related to safeguarding about clergy from one Church serving in the other, and in the joint appointments of clergy.

- The AOCICC urges the utmost care in ensuring consistency of safeguarding policies and procedures. This Council recognises that there are current hindrances to a consistent safeguarding policy which need urgently to be addressed.
- In Old Catholic dioceses, the regular safeguarding officer is the bishop. In both Communion the responsibility for protection resides with the bishop. In the Church of England, including the Diocese in Europe and in the Episcopal Church, the safeguarding officer is not the bishop. There is a child protection officer in every diocese and in every parish.

- When priests move from one Old Catholic Church to another, Old Catholic bishops rely only on the sending bishop's judgement, and not on independent and comprehensive safeguarding and disciplinary information.
- There is no one single procedure or policy covering all the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht or covering provinces and autonomous dioceses of the Anglican Communion. Each Church has its own policies reflecting national legal standards. The law of the land is the determining factor in shaping national church policies and procedures. Such differences make consistency of confidential disclosure about safeguarding matters among the Anglican and Old Catholic jurisdictions in Europe very complicated.
- Differences in the size between Anglican and Old Catholic populations, as well as access to resources, makes the development of a consistent policy a challenge.
- Difference of practice ought not to erode the things that we want to do together, especially interchangeability of clergy, as well as joint events with young people. In fact, the AOCICC urges the Churches, in light of their relationship of communion, to learn from each other, to engage in frank, honest, transparent exchange of vital information, and to strengthen each other in a joint commitment to make our Churches completely safe for children and vulnerable persons.
- During its meeting in 2017, the AOCICC, recognising the importance of these challenges, offered some concrete recommendations to the Anglican–Old Catholic bishops in Europe who were scheduled to meet in January 2018. That meeting was not fully constituted due to weather conditions in the Netherlands, but given the importance of this matter, and the Council's interest that this be dealt with as a matter of urgency, these essential recommendations, further modified at the AOCICC's 2019 meeting, are listed below.
 - That an Old Catholic be appointed as an observer to the Anglican Communion's Safe Church Commission, and that guidance from the Safe Church Commission be circulated to all members of the Council and to the bishops of the Churches.
 - That the Church of England's recent Faith and Order Commission text *The Gospel, Sexual Abuse and the Church* be circulated to the bishops of the Churches.
 - That the Anglican and Old Catholic bishops make a regular update on policies, procedures, cases and exchange of information about responsible persons and safeguarding officers in each jurisdiction a permanent agenda item on their annual meetings.
 - That bishops inform each other about the safeguarding and vetting requirements of their Churches towards those discerning a call to ordained ministry and for priests seeking new ministry appointments, and the frequency of renewal of safeguarding checks of the clergy.

Mandate iv: ‘To explore the possibility of establishing a representative body to oversee relationships in Europe’

1 AOCICC’s developing self-understanding

When the present AOCICC was given its mandate by the ACC and the IBC to begin work in 2013, that mandate included a request ‘to explore the possibility of establishing a representative body to oversee relationships in Europe’.

Sometimes it is better not to reinvent the wheel. Stimulated to reflect upon its own role (and some of this reflection has been described in the previous section of this report), the AOCICC has come more and more to the conclusion that it is well capable of discharging the role of oversight of relationships in Europe itself—with due deference, of course, to the rights and roles of the bishops involved. At the moment the Council has an (Irish) Anglican bishop and a (Dutch) Old Catholic bishop as the Co-Chairs, and they are able to develop extensive networks within and beyond their own communions. The Old Catholic members of the Council come from several countries, providing connections to the academic, administrative and pastoral facets of the Churches of the Union of Utrecht. As for the Anglican members, the fact that the Co-Chair has in recent years not been from the Church of England is a reminder that the Bonn Agreement relates not just to the Church of England but to the whole Anglican Communion. However, the suffragan bishop of the Church of England’s Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe is a member, as is a lay member of that diocese resident in Germany, and also two members of The Episcopal Church’s Convocation in Europe. In short, and given the proven capacity of the Council under its present mandate to oversee relationships and to take initiatives in a very practical way, the Council does not see that any further representative body is required.

However, if the AOCICC is to function effectively it is important that meetings continue to be fully attended and that membership remains drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds in church life, including people closely involved in the work of the church ‘on the ground’. At present the Council receives invaluable administrative and indeed theological support from the staff of the Anglican Communion Office. However, it has been frustrated and limited in regard to practical initiatives by a very modest, virtually non-existent, budget (apart from the costs of actual meetings). On several occasions the Co-Chairs and other Council members have had to take the proverbial begging bowl to their own home churches in order to ensure the initiatives of the Council could be implemented. While enlarging the current membership of ten (perhaps to include more lay people or a representative from Spain or Portugal) would involve increased costs and might make business somewhat more unwieldy at times, the question does arise as to whether observers or consultants should be invited – certainly for particular sessions to address specific issues. To give but one example: the Church of Sweden has now a direct relationship of communion with the Union of Utrecht, but relates to European Anglicans as one member church of the Porvoo Communion. Given this combination of circumstances, how might the Church of Sweden best be made aware of, and indeed drawn into, the relevant work and decisions of the AOCICC?

But to make matters clear: The AOCICC already has the capacity and the necessary representative nature to serve the two Communions through its oversight of relationships in Europe. Rather than create some new body, with possible negative consequences in terms of both confusion and cost, the AOCICC itself simply requires an appropriately enhanced mandate for this task.

2 The Appendix to *Belonging together in Europe*

As the AOCICC evolves in its self-understanding, this is a somewhat historical note at this point regarding a phase of previous work.

At the close of the last AOCICC mandate, the Council presented to the IBC and ACC the seminal reflective document *Belonging together in Europe*. It addressed some of the theological challenges in striving to witness effectively to a changing Europe. Both the ACC and the IBC welcomed the document, commended its study and regarded it as the foundation for the rather more practical work of the present mandate; hence the brochure published to introduce members of both Communion to each other and encourage them to take joint initiatives in mission (see p 22).

There is no doubt that the publication of *Belonging together in Europe* marked a key moment in Anglican–Old Catholic theological partnership. When it was in gestation, some of the Council members of the day contributed an imaginative and speculative Appendix which outlined the questions that would have to be faced if the issue of parallel jurisdictions were decisively addressed, if every geographical diocese had a single bishop, and if there were some kind of ordered convergence of the Union of Utrecht/the Church of England/the Lusitanian Church/the Spanish Episcopal Church/TEC Convocation on the European mainland.

The Appendix was never published. It was speculative if theologically driven, and it was felt its contents would detract from the main thrust of *Belonging together in Europe* and cause unnecessary and distracting debate. However, the Appendix has remained very much in the minds of the Council members, who now think they should draw attention to its existence and its place in records held by both Communion. It is now a historical document; in its day it sought to capture an exciting dream. Others will judge whether and when it might be timely to look at its suggestions anew. For students of church history it will seem a description of a vision, and even visionaries must acknowledge that they inevitably return to the inescapable reality of prevailing circumstances and the need for a pragmatic response. Yet dreams and visions have their place in the life of the people of God, and the time comes when it is expedient to leave some description of them for posterity.

Mandate v: ‘To advise on the establishment of appropriate instruments and concrete proposals for joint initiatives in mission work in continental Europe’

1 Survey

Early in its present mandate, the Council identified a need to investigate how Anglicans and Old Catholics are living out their relationship of communion locally. To that end, the Council members decided to conduct a survey to find out more about how individuals and congregations across Europe are engaging with one another and what they know about one another. The survey was conducted online in 2016–7. It was made available in five languages: English, Dutch, French, German and Polish. Invitations to take part were sent to the ordained and lay leaders of Anglican chaplaincies, Episcopal congregations, and Old Catholic parishes in Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, France and Poland. In total, 106 responses were received. Around one-quarter of the respondents were from Anglican/Episcopal congregations, and three-quarters from Old Catholic congregations.

The survey results show a significant amount of contact between Anglican/Episcopal and Old Catholic congregations, and interest in (and potential for) more involvement. Key findings include:

- A full 100% of respondents knew that the Anglican Communion and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht are in communion.
- In total, 97% of the Anglican respondents and 82% of the Old Catholic respondents have a congregation of the other church tradition located close by.
- Of those respondents who would like to find out more about the other tradition, 75% and 60% of the Anglican and Old Catholic respondents, respectively, would welcome access to more resources for joint worship.
- The most common types of contact between Anglican and Old Catholic congregations include sharing church buildings, holding joint worship services, swapping weekly or monthly newsletters, organising fundraising activities together, and extending invitations to ordinations, confirmations, carol services and other special events. However, joint social activities are rare. No joint Bible study or youth events were reported.
- When asked about local problems and challenges, 33% of respondents across all countries mentioned that they face a language barrier. Lack of interest was mentioned by 31%, and lack of time by 23%.

A complete report of the survey findings and country-by-country summaries are available separately from the AOCICC. They have been commended to the congregations and dioceses in each country for further reflection and recommendations.

The hope is that the survey both raises awareness of the special relationship and helps make local communities aware of forms of communication and cooperation that are possible so that they will follow through in a way appropriate to their local context.

2 Pilgrimage and the Willibrord Declaration

An exciting new initiative undertaken by the Council during the present mandate was the organisation of a pilgrimage for young adults from both Communion to the shrine of St Willibrord in Echternach, Luxembourg, from 25–28 May 2017. The goal and hope of the pilgrimage was to bring together a new generation of Anglicans and Old Catholics to experience personally the fruits of communion and inspire them to continue to engage with each other. The pilgrimage was organised by the national youth officer of the Swiss Old Catholic Church, the Revd Antje Kirchhofer, assisted by Co-Secretary Lars Simpson, and the national youth officers from the Dutch Old Catholic Church, the Revd Erna Peijnenburg, and the Austrian Old Catholic Church, the Revd Samuel Ebner.

The pilgrimage was led by the two Co-Chairs of the AOCICC, Bishop Dick Schoon and Bishop Michael Burrows. The context of the pilgrimage was regular worship in the crypt of the basilica of St Willibrord and a range of creative and theological workshops at the local youth hostel. Participants were given a historical introduction to the figure of St Willibrord and encouraged to reflect on his life as a model for Christian life and mission across national boundaries.

The pilgrimage led to intense discussions and the articulation of the concerns of the participants as Christians in today's world. This led to the formulation of the *Willibrord Declaration* by the participants (see Appendix 2). This striking document is an appeal and challenge to the Churches represented by the AOCICC to further their unity through joint practical action in the areas of justice and peace in the face of glaring disparities in our world and to uphold the integrity of creation in the face of devastating effects of climate change. For the participants it was clear that action taken must be informed by a common identity in Jesus Christ. As Christians we are called to stand for equality, justice, love and care, selflessness and honesty, and must seek to guard against judgemental attitudes. In undertaking these challenges, we must do so in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, inspired by his example. Each challenge articulated in the *Willibrord Declaration* cannot be addressed by the Church leadership alone. For the participants it was clear that all people, lay and ordained, young and old, must be integral to this process. For what does the Lord require of us, 'but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?' (Micah 6.8).

Mandate vi: ‘To review the consistency of ecumenical agreements and dialogues of the Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht’

An expression of our communion relationship with one another has meant that within the AOCICC, Anglicans and Old Catholics regularly update one another on their bilateral relationships with other Churches.

The Anglican Communion has two bilateral instruments with the Roman Catholic Church. The theological dialogue is the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). The International Anglican–Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission (IARCCUM), a dispersed episcopal commission, seeks to promote growth in communion between Anglicans and Roman Catholics, to promote the reception of the theological work of ARCIC, and to promote cooperation in mission. The Anglican Communion has bilateral relationships with the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches. There has also been a renewed dialogue with the World Communion of Reformed Churches. The Anglican bilateral dialogues with the Lutheran World Federation and the World Methodist Council have shifted from a theological agenda to one that promotes the work of the earlier theological dialogues, encourages relationships of communion, and promotes common mission.

Of interest to the representatives of the Union of Utrecht has been the coming into effect of a relationship of interchangeability of ministry between the Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland, and similar proposals between Anglicans and Methodists in England.

The Episcopal Church (TEC), to which the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe belongs, has also been engaged in its own bilateral dialogue with the United Methodist Church since 2002 with a proposal for communion with the United Methodists made in 2018 after the Churches concluded there were no dividing issues. The Episcopal Church has also entered into a communion agreement with the Church of Sweden and has established a full dialogue with the Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Bayern, Germany.

The Union of Utrecht has a bilateral dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church (second report published in 2017). It concluded its dialogue with the Orthodox Church in 1987 and started a working group in 2004. It started conversations on ethical questions with the Cilician Armenian Orthodox Church. The dialogue with the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar is almost complete. The Union of Utrecht has entered into communion with the Church of Sweden.

Both the Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht engage with other Christian Churches at the global level through the World Council of Churches, and the Conferences of Secretaries of the Christian World Communions the Global Christian Forum.

On The Church: Towards a Common Vision

One of the anxieties of the contemporary ecumenical movement is whether or not divided Christian communities have a common understanding of what it means to be the Church. While we may find agreement on baptism, or the eucharist, or on ministry, if we are not agreed, for instance, on what the church that we are baptised into means, there is an obstacle to Christian unity. Ecclesiology is like an operating system in that it describes what churches believe about themselves, mission, how they interact with other churches, how they engage with civil or other religious partners, and the like.

But what if the ecclesial operating systems are incompatible? And how could the churches possibly discern whether their ecclesiologies are compatible or incompatible? The Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches produced a tool when it published its convergence text on ecclesiology, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision (TCTCV)* (2013). While the text is a milestone, the most important part of the project will be the responses of the churches to the text. If there are significant convergences in the responses, there will be hard evidence that ecclesiological compatibility exists; if not, the work on ecclesiology continues. The evaluation of the responses is going on within one of the study groups of Faith and Order. It will be presented at the Assembly of the WCC in Karlsruhe in 2021 and will hopefully show some indicators for further reflection about unity.

The AOCICC at its 2018 meeting undertook a study of the Anglican and Old Catholic responses to TCTCV. The members of the Council had at hand Anglican responses from seven provinces. The Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht prepared a common response with the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, supported by the Mar Thoma Church. Old Catholic voices are also included in two statements from ecumenical bodies from the Netherlands, as are Anglican voices included in those responses from National Councils of churches. While the Council noted some diversity within the Anglican responses, it was clear that the Anglican and Old Catholic responses to TCTCV which it saw do cohere with one another. The overall reaction to TCTCV is appreciative, and Anglican and Old Catholic Churches recognise much of their own ecclesiology and theology in it. That the AOCICC was able to discern such a convergence is significant. Challenges could be met together, especially on the interpretation of chapter 4, 'The Church: In and for the world'.

Proposals for the next AOCICC mandate

For submission to ACC-17, 2019

Anglican–Old Catholic Relations

The Anglican Consultative Council

1. welcomes the report of the Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council — *Anglicans and Old Catholics serving in Europe* (2019); and
2. commends the report to the Churches of the Anglican Communion for study, action and response; and
3. renews the mandate for the Council, asking it:
 - a to continue to explore theologically the nature and meaning of our communion;
 - b to promote knowledge of our churches and their relationship;
 - c to assist the Old Catholic and Anglican bishops in Europe in their common ministry and coordinated oversight;
 - d to encourage joint initiatives in mission in continental Europe;
 - e to review the consistency of ecumenical agreements and dialogues of the Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht;
 - f to build on the work of previous mandates;
 - g as guarantor of the Bonn Agreement on behalf of both Communion, to oversee plans for the commemoration of the centenary of the Bonn Agreement in 2031.
4. thanks the Anglican members of the Coordinating Council and requests that the Archbishop of Canterbury name the Anglican co-chair in consultation with the Secretary General, and that the Secretary General name the Anglican members in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Appendix I – Communiqués

2013

Amersfoort, The Netherlands, 16 November 2013

The Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) met in Amersfoort, the Netherlands, from 13 to 16 November 2013. This was the first meeting of the newly mandated Council. The Council worked on the new mandate agreed by the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) as well as the International Bishops' Conference (IBC).

The members received reports of developments in the Anglican Communion and in the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht, and reviewed present ecumenical dialogues in which our churches are engaged. Particular attention was given to the relationship with the Mar Thoma Church with whom the Old Catholic Church has begun a dialogue. The Revd Prof Dr Peter-Ben Smit (University of Utrecht) informed the Council on the progress of the dialogue. The Mar Thoma Church is, like the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht, in full communion with the Churches of the Anglican Communion.

The Council discussed in depth the report *Belonging together in Europe: A joint statement on aspects of ecclesiology and mission* produced by the previous Council and considered how it could best be used to develop new areas of cooperation between the communions. The Council is commending the document to all church members. Over the next two years the Council will be facilitating a process to collate responses to the document from Anglicans and Old Catholics at all levels. Members of the Council will develop additional study resources to encourage engagement at parish and chaplaincy level.

The full text of *Belonging together in Europe* may be found at www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/oldcatholic/docs/AOCICC_Paper_Belonging_together_in_Europe_final.pdf. A German translation is in the process of being completed.

The Council agreed to start a process of mapping existing relationships and cooperation at local level. Thought was particularly given to working together to address social issues in Europe. The Council promotes the idea of establishing a joint Anglican–Old Catholic Youth Pilgrimage to Canterbury.

The Council encourages laity and clergy of both communions to attend the International Old Catholic Congress in Utrecht (NL) from 18 to 21 September 2014. As part of the congress there will be a Festive Eucharist to mark the 125th Anniversary of the Union of Utrecht on Saturday 20th September 2014 in St Gertrudis Cathedral, Utrecht. For more information see the website: www.okcongres2014.com

The Council worshipped regularly, and celebrated the Eucharist at the Old Catholic church of St Georgius in Amersfoort.

The Council is grateful to the International Bishops' Conference and the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands for their hospitality.

2014

Kilkenny, Ireland, 30 August 2014

The Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) met in Kilkenny, Ireland, from 27 to 30 August 2014.

This was the second meeting of the Council.

The Council worshipped regularly, and celebrated the Eucharist at Leighlin Cathedral.

The Council is grateful to the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory for their hospitality.

Major tasks of this meeting included:

- The editing of a booklet which introduces AOCICC's 2011 paper on Ecclesiology (*Belonging Together in Europe*) for the faithful of both communions;
- Consideration of how to develop further concrete proposals for the common mission of the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches on the European continent;
- Updating each other about developments within each Communion, including plans for the upcoming International Congress of the Old Catholic Churches which will mark the 125th anniversary of the Union of Utrecht;
- Briefing each other about developments in the bilateral ecumenical relationships in which each Communion is engaged.

A special session of the Council was devoted to engaging with representatives of European institutions in Ireland, to understand better the possibilities for engagement and witness in Europe; particularly how to take advantage of the opportunities for consultation afforded the Churches under the EU treaties.

The Council prayed and studied the Bible daily and, having visited the St Willibrord exhibition in Carlow, celebrated the Eucharist at Leighlin Cathedral together with members of the Church of Ireland.

The Council is grateful to the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory for its hospitality, the Dean and parishioners of Leighlin, and especially to Bishop Michael Burrows and his family, who welcomed us into their home for the meeting.

The Council wishes to record its gratitude to Canon Dr Alyson Barnett-Cowan for her distinguished contribution to its work over the last five years, and assures her of its prayers for the future.

2015

Zurich, Switzerland, 30 May 2015

The Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) met in Zurich, Switzerland, from 26 to 30 May 2015. The host of this meeting was the Old Catholic Church of Switzerland / Christkatholische Kirche der Schweiz. This was the third meeting of the Council under its current mandate.

The work of this meeting included:

- Reflecting on the nature and meaning of our communion
- Updating each other about developments within each Communion
- Briefing each other about developments in the bilateral and multilateral ecumenical relationships in which both Communion are engaged
- Finalising the text of a booklet, *Anglicans and Old Catholics together in Europe*, which introduces the faithful of both Communions to AOCICC's 2011 publication, *Belonging together in Europe—a joint statement on aspects of ecclesiology and mission* <http://bit.ly/1FJSvle>
- Planning an Anglican–Old Catholic Youth Pilgrimage in 2017 to Echternach, Luxembourg, the site of the shrine of St Willibrord
- Designing a survey which will map existing cooperation between Anglicans and Old Catholics in specific locations
- Considering how to develop concrete proposals for the common mission of the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches on the European continent
- Preparing for the Council's meeting with Archbishop Joris Vercammen (Union of Utrecht of Old Catholic Churches), Bishop Robert Innes (Church of England, Diocese in Europe), and Bishop Pierre Whalon (The Episcopal Church, Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe) in 2016

A significant feature of the 2015 meeting of the Council was its intentional encounters with local church communities. The members of the Council visited St Andrew's Church (Anglican), the Augustinerkirche and the Christuskirche (Old Catholic), as well as the Grossmuenster and the Fraumuenster (Reformed). The Council met cantonal church leaders at an ecumenical dinner. The Council engaged with the Bishop of the Swiss Old Catholic Church, Dr Harald Rein, in a lively dialogue on his vision of deepening the communion between Old Catholics and Anglicans in the local context of Switzerland – a discussion in which the Anglican Archdeacon of Switzerland, the Venerable Peter Potter, participated.

The Council prayed the Daily Office together according to the Anglican and Old Catholic traditions, engaged in Bible study, and celebrated the Eucharist together in St Andrew's Church and the Augustinerkirche along with members of the local congregations.

The Council is grateful to the Old Catholic Church of Switzerland and especially to the Parish of Zurich for its generous hospitality and use of its parish centre. It particularly records its appreciation to the Revd Lars Simpson.

The Council will meet again in Belgium, 7–11 June 2016, hosted by the Anglican Communion.

2016

Ghent, Belgium, 11 June 2016

The Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) met in Ghent, Belgium, from 7 to 11 June 2016. The Anglican Communion hosted the meeting. This was the fourth meeting of the Council under its current mandate.

The work of this meeting included:

- Reflecting on the nature and meaning of our communion
- Updating each other about developments within each Communion
- Briefing each other about developments in the bilateral and multilateral ecumenical relationships in which both Communion are engaged
- Finalising the text of a booklet, *Anglicans and Old Catholics together in Europe*, which introduces the faithful of both Communion to AOCICC's 2011 publication, *Belonging together in Europe—a joint statement on aspects of ecclesiology and mission* <http://bit.ly/1FJSvle>
- Planning an Anglican–Old Catholic Youth Pilgrimage in 2017 to Echternach, Luxembourg, the site of the shrine of St Willibrord
- Considering how to develop concrete proposals for the common mission of the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches on the European continent
- The Council met with Archbishop Joris Vercammen (Union of Utrecht of Old Catholic Churches), Bishop Robert Innes (Church of England, Diocese in Europe), and Bishop Pierre Whalon (The Episcopal Church, Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe).

It was a significant conversation, wide ranging and candid. The Council sought to be better informed about how to undertake its role of service to the two communions and reviewed our relationship, affirming the mandate.

The Council prayed the Daily Office together according to the Anglican and Old Catholic traditions, engaged in Bible study, and celebrated the Eucharist together.

2017

Königswinter, 8 July 2017

The Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) met in the Arbeitnehmerzentrum in Königswinter near Bonn, Germany, from 4 to 8 July 2017. The meeting was hosted by the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. This was the fifth meeting of the Council under its current mandate.

The work of this meeting included:

- reflecting on the nature and meaning of our communion;
- updating each other about developments within each Communion;
- briefing each other about developments in the bilateral and multilateral ecumenical relationships in which both Communions are engaged;
- considering how to develop concrete proposals for the common mission of the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches on the European continent.

A significant feature of the 2017 meeting of the Council was the receiving of the results of the survey *Belonging together in Europe* commissioned by the Council in 2015. The Council was encouraged by the 106 responses from five countries across mainland Europe. The survey reflected a high level of awareness of the relationship of full communion between Anglicans and Old Catholics. The survey illustrates the varied ways in which the churches are engaging with each other, especially in areas where congregations from both churches are present in the same place. Respondents requested more resources for joint worship services. The survey reflects concern with the issues of overlapping jurisdictions. There is a wish for a more strategic approach to mutual engagement in service, witness and mission. The Council agreed to send out the results of the survey to all respondents and participating churches and invites their comments for consideration at next year's meeting.

In the light of the many requests of survey respondents for more information about each other's churches, it was providential that the Council had planned the launch of the brochure *Anglicans and Old Catholics together in Europe* in the context of this year's meeting. The launch took place at the Hotel Königshof in Bonn overlooking the Rhine. It was in this historic location that the text of the Bonn Agreement between the Anglicans and Old Catholics was signed on 2 July 1931. The brochure seeks to provide an introduction, in a fresh and attractive way, to the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches in Europe. It is a distillation of issues raised in the Council's own 2011 statement *Belonging together in Europe – A joint statement on aspects of ecclesiology and mission*. The brochure is to be distributed by the various Anglican and Old Catholic dioceses to parishes and local communities.

Twenty-one young adults from nine countries joined the Co-Chairs of the Council and the national youth ministers of Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland for an AOCICC international pilgrimage to the Shrine of St Willibrord in Echternach, Luxembourg, over Ascension, from 25 to 28 May 2017. The Council records its gratitude to the Revd Antje Kirchhofer for her tireless efforts in organising the pilgrimage. The Council received with appreciation a common statement from the participants in German and English called the Willibrord Declaration/Willibrord Erklärung. It commends this text (see appendix) to the churches. The Willibrord Declaration will inform and shape the Council's work and future mandate. Similarly, the Council recommends that the issues identified in the Declaration will be addressed by participants of the International Old Catholic Youth Congress in Austria, from 20 to 23 September 2018. The Council encourages participants of the pilgrimage 2017 to attend next year's congress.

At the request of the recent meeting of Anglican and Old Catholic Bishops on mainland Europe, the Council reflected on the issues of child abuse and safeguarding. The Council recognises the

centrality and importance of safeguarding in both communions whilst noting the differences in the structure and procedures of each national church policy. The interchangeability of ministers is a significant area where the churches are obliged to exchange information and to take the utmost care in ensuring consistency in their policies and procedures.

The work of the Council began and closed with a Eucharist at which the Bishop of Haarlem, Dr Dirk Jan Schoon, and Bishop David Hamid, Suffragan in the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe, presided and preached respectively. The Council also prayed the Daily Office together according to the Anglican and Old Catholic traditions. The Council especially appreciated the opportunity to join the celebration of Ecumenical Vespers in the Namen-Jesu-Kirche in the centre of Bonn. The Council appreciated the help and assistance provided by Ordinariatsrat Dr Ralph Kirscht at the Episcopal Office and AOCICC member Jennifer Knudsen for their invaluable support in planning this meeting and facilitating contact with the local Anglican and Old Catholic parishes. The Revd Richard Gardiner and the Revd John Clasper from the Anglican Chaplaincy of Bonn and Cologne attended part of the meeting. Reiner Knudsen, vice-chair of the Synod Standing Committee of the Catholic Diocese of the Old Catholics in Germany, joined the Council at its closing Eucharist and brought the greetings of its Bishop, Matthias Ring.

The Council will next meet in Winchester, England, 22–26 May 2018, hosted by the Anglican Communion and then in Prague, Czechia, 16–19 January 2019, hosted by the Old Catholic Churches Union of Utrecht.

2018

Winchester, 26 May 2018

The Anglican–Old Catholic International Co-ordinating Council (AOCICC) met in the historic city of Winchester, UK, from 22 to 26 May 2018. The meeting was hosted by the Anglican Communion. This was the sixth meeting of the Council under its current mandate (2013–2019).

The work of this meeting included:

- reflecting on the nature and meaning of our communion;
- updating each other about developments within each Communion;
- briefing each other about developments in the bilateral and multilateral ecumenical relationships in which both Communions are engaged;
- reviewing the overall work of the Council in this the twentieth year of the Council's existence;
- reflecting on the work of the Council during the period of the present mandate with a view to preparing a report for the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) and the International Bishops' Conference (IBC) of the Union of Utrecht;
- beginning to consider the focus of a new mandate.

The Council came together in Winchester in its twentieth year, invigorated by the substantial success of the survey of Anglican and Old Catholic communities in Continental Europe, which has demonstrated a high level of local co-operation and initiatives. Similarly, the Council is

encouraged by the wide circulation of the brochure *Anglicans and Old Catholics together in Europe* since its launch at last year's Council meeting in Bonn. It was agreed to produce a German version of the brochure, reprint the English-language version and encourage online versions in Czech and Polish.

Council members Bishop David Hamid and Professor Angela Berlis, who served as Co-secretaries in the early years, reflected on twenty years of the Council. The Council was called into being following the Lambeth Conference of 1998, by the ACC and the IBC. The Council was reminded of the important contribution of the first two Co-Chairs, Old Catholic Bishop Joachim Vobbe, who died on 26 July 2017, and Anglican Bishop Jonathan Gledhill, in shaping the way the Council does its work. They both felt it important that the Council operate fully in German and English, and that worship and study undergird its work. Bishop David Hamid said, "the importance of this body being called a Council underlines that the relationship between Anglicans and Old Catholics is one of full communion". Angela Berlis reiterated, "the significance of the Council's work lies in it covering the worldwide Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht". The Council sees itself as the guarantor of the Bonn Agreement of 1931, which ushered in this full communion, and the Council is already beginning to consider the context for the centenary celebrations in 2031.

The Council reviewed the Anglican and Old Catholic responses to the WCC convergence text *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* and commends the continued study of the document to both our church communions, especially as a component of ministerial training.

The Council has sought to host its meetings during the present mandate in or near city centres (Amersfoort, Kilkenny, Zurich, Ghent, Königswinter near Bonn and now Winchester). This has given us many opportunities to encounter local Anglican and Old Catholic communities.

The work of the Council in Winchester was greatly enriched by the opportunity to worship regularly in the Cathedral for morning and evening prayer and the daily Eucharist, according to Anglican and Old Catholic rites. The Council appreciated the visit of the Bishop of Winchester, The Right Reverend Tim Dakin, for a lively exchange about the mission and renewal of the Church, as well as a consideration of the figure of St. Willibrord. The Council greatly enjoyed the hospitality of the Dean of Winchester Cathedral, the Very Reverend Catherine Ogle, and Chapter at the Deanery and would like to thank them for their warm and gracious welcome.

The Council will meet for its final meeting of the present mandate period in Prague, Czechia, 16–19 January 2019, hosted by the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht.

2019

Prague, 19 January 2019

The Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) met in the central European capital city of Prague, Czech Republic, from 16 to 19 January 2019. The meeting was hosted by the Union of Utrecht. This was the seventh and final meeting of the Council under its current mandate (2013–2019).

The work of this meeting centred on:

- finalising the *Report of the Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council 2013–2019*
- *to the Anglican Consultative Council and the International Bishops' Conference;*
- the importance of and progress made in Safeguarding in both Communion;
- formulating recommendations for the next mandate of the AOCICC.

The Council was invited to a meeting with Cardinal Dominik Duka OP, Archbishop of Prague, and Auxiliary Bishop Václav Malý at the Archbishop's palace. Members of the council appreciated the opportunity to learn from them about the challenges the Czech Churches faced throughout the 20th century and to the present day. Worshipping together has always been integral to the meetings of the Council. Alongside the Daily Office (celebrated alternatively according to the Anglican or Old Catholic tradition), the Council celebrated the Eucharist in the Old Catholic tradition at the Old Catholic Cathedral of St Lawrence in Prague, at the invitation of the Dean the Revd ThDr. Petr Jan Vinš. The Council thanks him, the bishop of the Old Catholic Church of the Czech Republic, the Rt Revd PhDr Pavel Benedikt Stránský, and the Bishop's Office in Prague for organising and hosting the meeting.

Appendix 2

Willibrord Declaration 2017

Between 25th-28th May 2017 21 Old Catholic and Anglican young people gathered in Echternach (Luxemburg) a place of symbolic unity. We took St Willibrord's example, and explored what unites our churches and the challenges we face. We have experienced and celebrated unity in practice during our pilgrimage, and have learnt, discussed, worshipped and prayed together despite our different languages, traditions and cultures.

We believe unity is best expressed through joint practical action. As a result of these experiences we challenge the Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC) and the Churches it represents to take the following actions:

1. Further promote this unity with opportunities for many members of each Church to meet, discuss and pray together. Unity is so often built from personal relationships and listening with humility. These opportunities must be open and accessible to all.
2. Increase religious literacy and inter-faith/denominational dialogue, both inside Christian churches and our wider societies. This is crucial to countering ignorance, prejudice, and reduce misunderstanding and conflict.
3. Radically act to address injustices in our world. We believe this must be done through careful and prayerful reflection, followed by bold Christ-like action. Significant injustices in our minds are:
 - All forms of **DISCRIMINATION** both within and outside the Church.
 - Lack of stewardship and disregard for our **ENVIRONMENT**, climate change and irresponsible agriculture.
 - Continuing **POVERTY** and the exploitation of the most vulnerable in society.
 - Lack of sufficient meaningful action regarding the **REFUGEE CRISIS** and the language of hate.
 - Ongoing **RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE** leading to terrorism and war. We must candidly discuss the interplay of religion and violence in our collective history.
 - Misuse of and ignorance towards **TECHNOLOGY**. As Christians, we should engage with the ethical implications of new technologies and the data they gather.
 - **UNETHICAL PRACTICES** leading to inequality such as in business, fashion, education, politics, and in our Churches (both locally and internationally).

We believe a productive way forward is to form groups of people, both clergy and laity, from all Churches who are truly passionate about each individual injustice.

4. All action taken must be informed by our common identity in Jesus Christ. We, as Christians, must stand for equality, justice, love and care, selflessness, honesty, and guard against judgemental attitudes.
5. We, as the Church, must take ownership of our past failures, as well as celebrating successes, and with the help of God address the pain caused in our history. We must do this to move forward as disciples of Christ.

In undertaking these challenges, we must do so in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, inspired by his example. Each challenge cannot be addressed by the Church leadership alone. All people, lay and ordained, young and old, must be integral to this process.

For what does the Lord require of us, “but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

Echternach, Luxemburg, 27 May 2017

Endnotes

- 1 www.aco.org/media/102933/AOCICC_Paper_Belonging_together_in_Europe_final.pdf
- 2 www.utrechter-union.org/page/294/relations_with_the_anglican_chur
- 3 The communiqués of the 2013–2019 mandate, which contain further details of the meetings held, are attached as Appendix 1.
- 4 *Anglicanos e Velho-Católicos em Portugal, Espanha, e Europa/Anglican and Old Catholic in Portugal, Spain and Europe*, Vila Nova de Gaia (Igreja Lusitana Católica Apostólica Evangélica/Instituto Anglicano de Estudos Teológicos) 2017, 127 pages.
- 5 Joris Vercammen, Opening Address: 80 Years Bonn Agreement, 10 Years Charta Oecumenica; Geoffrey Rowell, Opening Address: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Anglican Anglican–Old Catholic Communion; Angela Berlis, Mission Accomplished? Challenges of the Bonn Agreement (1931) for today; Keith Clements, Believing and Belonging: Perspectives on Christian Developments in Europe today
- 6 Angela Berlis, Bericht über die Internationale Anglikanisch – Altkatholische Theologenkonzferenz in Exeter IKZ 106, 2016, 106–109); Joris Vercammen, Some pastoral reflections on the authority of the churches in a pluralistic Europe (ibid., 109–115); Michael Burrows, Exploring the Authority of the Minority. Reflections from a Church of Ireland Perspective (ibid., 115–121). ‘Ecclesiology’ 13 (2017) Nikolaus Knoeffler/Martin O’Malley, Karl Rahner and Pope Francis on Papal Ministry: Towards an Ecumenical Ecclesiology of Communion and Subsidiarity (Ecclesiology 13, 2017, 55–82); Peter-Ben Smit, Authority in the New Testament and the New Testament’s Authority (ibid., 83–101); Adrian Suter: Fallible Authority (ibid., 161–178).
- 7 Paul Avis / Angela Berlis / Nikolaus Knoepffler / Martin O’Malley (eds.), *Incarnating Authority. A Critical Account of Authority in the Church*, Herbert Utz Verlag, Munich 2019 (with contributions by Anglican scholars Paul Avis, Catherine Shelley, Martyn Percy and Jeremy Worthen, and Old Catholic scholars Jan Hallebeek and Angela Berlis).
- 8 Charlotte Methuen, A View from Without – Reflections on the Old Catholic Church from an Anglican Perspective, in IKZ 108, 2018, 136–159.
- 9 IREI, see www.ikz-bios.unibe.ch/irei_conferences.html
- 10 www.ikz-bios.unibe.ch/
- 11 www.anglicancommunion.org/media/307411/AOCICC-Brochure-2017.pdf

