

International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue Communiqué

8 September 2016, Clare College, Cambridge



The International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue (IRAD) between the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) and the Anglican Communion met for its second meeting, at Clare College, Cambridge, England, 2 to 8 September 2016. The Co-Chairs are the Revd Elizabeth Welch (Reformed) and the Most Revd David Chillingworth (Anglican).

The current series of discussions is the first that the Anglican and Reformed Communion have had since 1984, when their dialogue wrote the statement, *God's Reign and our Unity*. The Dialogue has been mandated to study to the nature of communion (*koinonia*), a wide range of missiological challenges facing the two Communion, and the sources wherein the work of the Spirit may be discerned, notably authority and governance, episcopate and episcopacy. The theme of this second meeting has been 'The nature of communion and its challenges'.

As part of its reflection on the nature of communion, there have been presentations and discussion from the perspectives of the Trinity in seventeenth century English Reformed theology in dialogue with contemporary Orthodox theology; a theology of *koinonia* from the perspective of the sending (*missio*) of the Son rather than the mutually dependent interpersonal relationships (*perichoresis*) between the Three Divine Persons; and a reflection on the historical instruments within which *koinonia* has been maintained.

In a series of meetings the Commission discussed the nature of communion, its quality and intensiveness, misunderstandings over theological and adiaphoral issues (neither authoritatively required nor forbidden matters), the continuities which provide the perennial bedrock of the two ecclesial traditions, and the ways in which such continuities are ritualized

in contrast to society outside the church. In an atmosphere of reflection the Commission considered how communion can be cared for and sustained when challenges threaten to overwhelm. The Commission took stock of the challenges to communion experienced by both traditions, but remembered the creative improvisation and the joy and hospitality of the Word made Flesh on our behalf.

The Commission deeply regretted the three year suspension of the Revd Dr Amy Richter, a priest of The Episcopal Church, from the Dialogue, because of the decision taken by the Primates' Meeting of the Anglican Communion.

Members of the Commission were delighted to see the only autograph manuscript of The Westminster Confession at Westminster College, Cambridge, thanks to the good offices of The Revd Dr Stephen Orchard, Principal Emeritus of the College. They were also made welcome by Dr Christopher de Hamel and allowed see priceless treasures of the Anglican tradition in the Parker Library at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

The Dialogue began with a celebration of Holy Communion in King's College, Cambridge, using a liturgy of the Scottish Episcopal Church at which the Anglican Co-Chair presided and the Reformed Co-Chair preached, and closed with a celebration of Holy Communion according to the Reformed tradition in the Chapel of Clare College, at which the Reformed Co-Chair presided and the Anglican Co-Chair preached. The members of the dialogue prayed together each morning and evening.

This second meeting of the Commission was hosted by the Anglican Communion and greatly facilitated by the Revd Dr James Hawkey, Dean of Clare College.

To experience an example of vibrant ecumenical worship, the Commission was welcomed by the Revd Canon Philipa King to St Luke's Parish Church which is a Church of England/ United Reformed Church Local Ecumenical Partnership. Members of the Commission later worshipped at Evensong in Ely Cathedral, thereby gaining a sense of the thousand year history of worship in cathedral churches.

The Commission will meet again at Princeton Theological Seminary in early September 2017.

Members of the Dialogue present at the meeting:

Anglicans

The Most Revd David Chillingworth
Scottish Episcopal Church
Dr Clint Le Bruyns
Anglican Church of Southern Africa
The Revd Prof Dr Renta Nishihara
Nippon Sei Ko Kai
The Ven Helene T. Steed
Church of Ireland
The Revd Dr James Hawkey
Church of England

Staff

The Revd Canon Dr John Gibaut
(Co-Secretary)
The Revd Neil Vigers
Anglican Communion Office

Reformed

The Revd Elizabeth Welch Co-Chair
United Reformed Church, England
The Very Rev Professor Iain R. Torrance
The Church of Scotland
The Right Revd Dr Royce M Victor
Church of South India
The Revd Gertrude Aopesyaga Kapuma
Church of Central Africa Presbyterian
The Revd Professor R. Gerald Hobbs
United Church of Canada

Dr Aruna Gnanadason (WCRC Consultant)

The Revd Dr Stephen Orchard
United Reformed Church (England)