

IASCER Resolutions arising from the 2005 meeting

Resolution 1.05:

The Windsor Report

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Ecumenical Relations

- reaffirms its statement of December 2004 (appended below)
- re-emphasizes the value and significance of *The Windsor Report* in addressing critical issues in Anglican ecclesiology and as a vital resource in the ecumenical relations of the Anglican Communion
- underlines the necessity of engaging with ecumenical partners as part of deeper reflection on the issues the report raises, particularly in relation to ecclesiology
- encourages Provinces to consult with appropriate ecumenical partners as the Provinces develop their own responses to the report as requested by the Primates' Statement issued at Dromantine, and by ACC-13
- recommends that the Anglican Communion consult ecumenically as it works toward developing an Anglican Covenant, taking into account existing agreements, commitments and ecumenical covenants.

Response to the Windsor Report

IASCER has been asked to respond to the Windsor Report in preparation for the meeting of the Primates in February 2005. Below are the initial reflections on the Report and its ecumenical implications, agreed at IASCER's meeting in December 2004.

The Windsor Report is a rich resource for ecumenical endeavours, offering mature consideration of Anglican self-understanding, grounded in Scripture, which invites partners to engage with the fundamental issues that it addresses.

These issues, and the Communion's response, have major ecumenical implications.

Reception of the Windsor Report: Implications for Ecumenical Relations

IASCER hopes the Communion will pursue the Report's recommendations, as this will significantly assist ecumenical relations. Not following this course is likely to complicate and further impair relations.

Provinces should note that ecumenical partners will follow their responses in close detail.

IASCER welcomes in principle the proposal for a Council of Advice for the Archbishop of Canterbury (§111,112). This should contain ecumenical expertise and be charged with considering ecumenical dimensions of the matters before it, in conjunction with appropriate advice from IASCER.

IASCER also welcomes in principle the proposal for an Anglican Covenant (§118-120). This could have major implications for the conduct of ecumenical relations, as a covenant might clarify the process by which the Anglican Communion makes decisions about proposed ecumenical agreements.

IASCER believes the recognition and articulation of the body of shared principles of Canon Law could strengthen the ecclesial character of the Anglican Communion (§113-117).

In their legislation, Anglican provinces should always be mindful of their local and global ecumenical responsibilities (§47, 79, 130).

Associated Developments in Ecumenical Relations

Several ecumenical partners have reacted strongly to the developments behind the Windsor Report (§28, 130).

Consequentially, there is a slow-down in some bilateral dialogues during what partners see as this unstable period prior to provinces' responses to the Report. Some have questioned whether we are a reliable and consistent ecumenical partner.

Nevertheless, partners have appreciated our ecumenical intent, shown by seeking their contributions to the Lambeth Commission, and now inviting their responses to the Report.

IASCER looks forward to studying these responses, as a further contribution to our ecumenical relations.

The Windsor Report as a Resource for Ecumenical Relations

Many of the Report's themes are prominent in ecumenical relations, eg the nature of the Church and local, regional and international ecclesial bodies, and relationships between them; authority; the instruments of unity; and *episkopé*, including primacy.

Koinonia refers primarily to the life of the one Church of Christ. Its theological principles therefore are relevant both to the life of the Anglican Communion and to ecumenical relations (Section B in particular). Fractures in communion are always serious and care should be exercised in using such expressions as 'impaired communion.'

The report also articulates a vision of the nature of Anglicanism which can be offered in ecumenical relations. Whatever we say about the Anglican Communion and its ecumenical relations should be brought to the touchstone of the four credal marks of the Church – One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic (§49).

Issues for Further Consideration

Many partner churches experience similar tensions over human sexuality. They also face the legislative redefinition of marriage in many countries (§28). We might profitably share with each other our continuing work on the theological understanding of human sexuality, and its grounding in Scripture, tradition and reason.

Many provinces have entered various Covenants with partners: fuller theological reflection on the meaning of Covenant might help our understanding of our interdependence.

IASCER considers that ecumenical relations would be assisted by further careful clarification of terminology (eg distinguishing between homosexual orientation and practice; also clarifying usage of 'church' between the Universal Church and its Anglican expressions).

Ecumenical relations would similarly be helped by fuller exploration and articulation of the following matters to which the Windsor Report refers:

- The role of the Archbishop of Canterbury – noting the Communion-wide ministry of the Archbishop of Canterbury as an Instrument of Unity, and in the service of the other Instruments of Unity (§108-110). *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* speaks of personal, collegial and communal dimensions of ministry operating at every level of the Church's life (BEM: Ministry, III.B.27).
- Adiaphora – noting that Hooker spoke rather of 'things accessory to salvation' (§36,37)
- The 'common good' – noting this applies within the Anglican Communion, and within the Universal Church and wider world (§51,80)
- Covenant – noting that several provinces have entered various types of covenant with ecumenical partners, and that fuller theological reflection on the meaning and expression of covenant may help our understanding of our familial relationship (§119)
- Language used to describe interdependence within the Anglican Communion, which may help us, and our partners, better understand and live out the autonomy within mutual commitments.

Resolution 2.05

Civil Partnerships

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Ecumenical Relations

- notes that recent legislation proposed or enacted in several countries permitting the formal 'registration of same-sex partnerships' or 'civil marriage' of same-sex partners raises concerns for all the churches

- notes that ecumenical concerns have also arisen as a consequence of the responses given to such legislation within certain Anglican provinces and other churches
- recommends that further study should be undertaken, in consultation with ecumenical partner churches, of theological anthropology and of the way that the Church should respond to socio-cultural changes in this area.

Resolution 3.05

Episcopal Collegiality

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Ecumenical Relations

- notes with concern the recent growth of instances of the consecration of a bishop by the bishops of one Province with the intention that the person consecrated serve in another, and the appointment of bishops or priests for missionary work in other Provinces
- believes that such actions challenge the canonical and ecclesiological understanding of a bishop as chief pastor of a local church and a member of the episcopal college, which has been a consistent part of the Anglican understanding of episcopacy in ecumenical discussion, agreement and commitment
- recognises that provincial decisions that impinge on the collegiality of the episcopate have consequences for existing and emerging ecumenical agreements and commitments
- resolves to undertake a study of the compatibility of decisions concerning the ordained ministry, including episcopal collegiality with ecumenical agreements and commitments
- recommends Provinces to weigh carefully the potential ecumenical implications of any decisions on, or proposals for, action concerning episcopal ministry and seek the advice of IASCEC whenever such ecumenical implications may be involved.

Resolution 4.05

Admission of the Non-baptised to Holy Communion

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Ecumenical Relations

- notes with grave concern instances in some parts of the Anglican Communion of inviting non-baptised persons, including members of non-Christian religious traditions, to receive Holy Communion in Anglican celebrations of the Eucharist, and that this practice is contrary to Catholic order as reflected in the

canonical discipline of our churches, and undermines ecumenical agreements and partnerships

- undertakes to study further the ecumenical consequences of communion of the unbaptised.