

### 36. Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group

<b>Contact names and details</b>	Mr David Walton: <a href="mailto:dswalton@gmx.com">dswalton@gmx.com</a>  The Rt Revd Paul Bayes  Co-Chairs of the Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group
<b>Resolution</b>	36/1. The Conference receives the Report.
<b>Subject and aims</b>	To report on the work of the Group during the past year.
<b>Background context and relevant documents (with function)</b>	<p><i>The Challenge of the Covenant: Uniting in Mission and Holiness</i> (Methodist Conference Agenda (2014), pp.125-145 (<a href="http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-2014-21-challenge-covenant-uniting-mission-holiness.pdf">www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-2014-21-challenge-covenant-uniting-mission-holiness.pdf</a>) and <i>The Anglican-Methodist Covenant: A report from the Council for Christian Unity, to which is appended the Final Report from the Joint Implementation Commission</i> (GS 1971) (<a href="http://www.churchofengland.org/media/2101244/gs%201971%20-%20the%20anglican-methodist%20covenant%20report%20from%20the%20joint%20implementation%20commission.pdf">www.churchofengland.org/media/2101244/gs%201971%20-%20the%20anglican-methodist%20covenant%20report%20from%20the%20joint%20implementation%20commission.pdf</a>))</p> <p>Report of the Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group (2015) (Daily Record (2015), 8/27) (<a href="http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/1770961/conf-2015-daily-record-complete-0715.pdf">www.methodist.org.uk/media/1770961/conf-2015-daily-record-complete-0715.pdf</a>) and GS Misc 1118 (<a href="http://www.churchofengland.org/media/2252315/gs%20misc%201118%20-%20report%20of%20the%20joint%20covenant%20monitoring%20and%20advocacy%20group.pdf">www.churchofengland.org/media/2252315/gs%20misc%201118%20-%20report%20of%20the%20joint%20covenant%20monitoring%20and%20advocacy%20group.pdf</a>))</p>

#### Introduction

1. The Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group (JCAMG) continues its work guided, we believe, by the Holy Spirit, with the purpose of helping both our Churches to grow deeper into the covenant relationship we share under God and to express more fully our commitment to mission and unity for the sake of God’s kingdom. The Group is approaching its work positively and prayerfully in a spirit of honesty and sober confidence: we think that it is vital to take seriously the realities of the ecumenical climate in both our Churches; at the same time, we rejoice that the power at work within us is able to accomplish far more than all we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20).
2. The JCAMG recognises that for our two Churches to move forward in covenant a number of developments are necessary, each of which requires courage and imagination and none of which is sufficient on its own. To recall the titles of the other reports of the Joint Implementation Commission, it is necessary for more of us to live and embrace the covenant, respond to its challenge, and relate to and work with each other in the spirit of the covenant; emotional commitment is a significant aspect of a relationship. Both our Churches need to adopt an ecumenical humility that, following the approach of receptive ecumenism, encourages the reception of insights and gifts from the other. The proposals to be brought forward by the faith and order bodies of our two Churches need to be set in this wider context and make a difference to the life and mission of our Churches.
3. The Group met in September 2015 and February 2016, and has agreed dates for its next three meetings.

## **Advocacy and monitoring**

4. In December 2015, the Co-Chairs and Co-Secretaries of the JCAMG met with officers of the faith and order bodies of our two Churches and the Co-Chairs of the Joint Subgroup on Ministry and Oversight appointed by those bodies. We are delighted to report that the Joint Subgroup is making good progress with its tasks. It has met on five occasions since the Conference and General Synod each met in the summer of 2015 and much work is being done between those meetings. A further joint meeting of the faith and order bodies has been arranged for September; it is expected to consider a first draft of the proposals.
5. In April, the Co-Chairs and Co-Secretaries of the Group met with the Co-Chairs of the Methodist Anglican Panel for Unity in Mission (MAPUM). MAPUM continues to fulfil its key role: to support and advise our Churches locally and regionally to give priority to making full use of what is already possible for them to do together, and especially in encouraging them to plan together for mission and worship, deployment of ministry and the use of resources. The meeting looked at the JCAMG's proposal for the appointment of a number of 'covenant champions' (see below).
6. The JCAMG has noted some of the other major pieces of work that are expected to engage our two Churches (including the General Synod and the Conference) over the next few years. It recognises the importance of maintaining momentum in all aspects of the work it is monitoring and of there being sufficient time for proper communication, advocacy, and consideration of the proposals from the faith and order bodies. Currently, it thinks that these proposals should be presented to the Methodist Conference and the General Synod of the Church of England no later than July 2018.

## **Covenant Champions**

7. The JCAMG cannot fulfil the task of advocacy on its own, so it proposes to establish a supporting network of 'Covenant Champions' who will assist in this task at district and diocesan level. Their task will be twofold:
  - a. to champion and communicate within the Dioceses and Districts proposals about episcopacy and reconciliation of ministries in the successive stages of the synodical and conference processes (for example by setting up meetings, encouraging sufficient time to be included in synodical agendas for good discussion of proposals), and
  - b. to communicate news about initiatives at national level in order to enthuse others within the Dioceses and Districts and to gather and share good stories of Anglican – Methodist joint working within Dioceses and Districts to share widely (for example, through an updated Covenant website and e-newsletter).

## **Presentation to the Methodist Conference and the General Synod**

8. In addition to this brief written report, the JCAMG is preparing a presentation for the Methodist Conference and the General Synod.

## **\*\*\*RESOLUTION**

### **36/1. The Conference received the Report.**

