

***The Columba Declaration***  
**The Church of England  
and the Church of Scotland**



The Report of the Joint Study Group of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland: *Growth in Communion, Partnership in Mission* was received by the General Synod of the Church of England on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016. In receiving the Report, and the *Columba Declaration* which expresses the measure of agreement reached by our two churches, the Church of England and the Church of Scotland affirm that we share a common calling within our particular contexts and that this has enabled us to realise a growth in communion and a partnership in mission. In witness thereof we make the following historic Declaration:

We, the Church of Scotland and the Church of England, make the following acknowledgements and commitments:

a) Acknowledgements

(i) We acknowledge one another's churches as churches belonging to the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the apostolic ministry and mission of the whole people of God.

(ii) We acknowledge that in both our churches the word of God is truly preached, and the sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion are rightly administered.

(iii) We acknowledge that both our churches share in the common confession of the apostolic faith.

(iv) We acknowledge that one another's ordained ministries of word and sacraments are given by God as instruments of grace and we look forward to a time when growth in communion can be expressed in fuller unity that makes possible the interchangeability of ministers.

(v) We acknowledge that personal, collegial and communal oversight (*episkope*) is embodied and exercised in our churches in a variety of forms, as a visible sign expressing and serving the Church's unity and continuity in apostolic life,

mission and ministry.

b) Commitments

We commit ourselves to grow together in communion and to strengthen our partnership in mission. Through this commitment, we hope to enrich our continuing relationships with other churches in the United Kingdom and around the world. We will welcome opportunities to draw other churches into the activities and initiatives that we share.

As part of that commitment, we will continue to:

(i) pray for and with one another;

(ii) welcome one another's members to each other's worship as guests and receive one another's members into the congregational life of each other's churches where that is their desire;

(iii) explore opportunities for congregational partnership, formal as well as informal, in those cases where there are churches in close geographical proximity;

(iv) enable ordained ministers from one of our churches to exercise ministry in the other church, in accordance with the discipline of each church;

(vi) identify theological issues that arise from growth towards fuller communion and be prepared to allocate resources to addressing them;

(vii) work together on social, political and ethical issues that arise from our participation in public life and be prepared to allocate resources to joint initiatives for addressing them.

**Rt. Rev. Dr. Russell Barr**

Moderator of the General Assembly  
of the Church of Scotland

**Most Revd. & Rt. Hon. Justin Welby**

Archbishop of Canterbury

Crown Court Church, London  
28<sup>th</sup> November 2016