

APPENDIX O

**AGREED PRINCIPLES
FROM THE METHODIST AND CHURCH OF IRELAND WORKING GROUPS
ON THE INTERCHANGEABILITY OF MINISTRY**

We reaffirm that we discern personal, communal, and collegial episcopate in each of our denominations and that all three expressions of episcopate are essential to the polities of our traditions.

We have discerned consonance between the office and function of Presidents and Past Presidents of the Methodist Church in Ireland and in the office and function of Bishops in the Church of Ireland based on the current doctrinal understanding and ecclesiology of both Churches.

We affirm the collegial participation of at least three persons, who express the office and function of Episcopal ministry, in the act of dedication of a new President and in the consecration of a Bishop and the communal affirmation of the action by the People of God.

Common features of the act of dedication/consecration in the two Churches are prayer, the laying on of hands, the presentation of the Bible and vesting.

To enable us to recognise more fully the expression of episcopate in each of our Churches it is necessary to embrace the mutual participation of the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland or Past Presidents in the consecration of Bishops in the Church of Ireland and the participation of Bishops of the Church of Ireland in the installation and dedication of a President in the Methodist Church in Ireland.

Accepting the principle of such mutual participation has been the key to achieving substantial agreement on how to bring about the full interchangeability of ministry. Certain practical actions will also be necessary

We recommend that full proposals be brought forward to the General Synod and to the Methodist Conference in 2011.

These should include a date from which there will be:

- Mutual involvement in the consecration of Bishops and dedication of Presidents.
- Consequential interchangeable ministry.
- Mutual celebration and affirmation of the presbyteral ministry of all of those ordained in both Churches, including those duly ordained in the past.

This development does not circumscribe the relationship each of our Churches may have with other Christian traditions.

A duly ordained presbyter/priest of either Church may administer Holy Communion in the other Church according to either rite or ceremony.

Standing Committee – Report 2010

A presbyter/priest of one covenanting church ministering in the context of the other will be treated as being within the order and discipline of that Church as well as within the order and discipline of their own Church.

Practical implications

Appropriate mutual participation in ordinations to all forms of ministry will be normative.

A practical implication of our learning with each other would be the affirmation and renewal of the diaconate.

Bishops of the Church of Ireland welcome Presidents and Past Presidents of the Methodist Church in Ireland as sharing in their order and ministry.

The Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland will likewise welcome Bishops of the Church of Ireland.