

GENERAL SYNOD 2013

Report of the Covenant Council

Proposed by the Very Revd Nigel Dunne, Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Your Grace

In this the eleventh year of our Covenant relationship with our brothers and sisters in the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Covenant Council are pleased to report on very significant progress made in the last year, not least in two key areas:

1. Local Covenant Partnerships and Projects

The signing of a Local Covenant Partnership at Queen's University, Belfast is one of the highlights of the past year with the Church of the Resurrection now recognised by both denominations as a 'Covenant Church' and a new Covenant Management Group is in place. This partnership is working very well and is testament to the value of such arrangements, not least in strengthening the work of the church on campus.

The Council has been very happy to provide support for ongoing projects at the Church of the Good Shepherd and Primacy in Bangor and in Maghaberry. We are available to any parishes and congregations who are exploring possible future partnerships and local cooperation - please let us know about what is going on in your area and how we might be of support.

2. Interchangeability of Ministry

We have now arrived at the point where the Methodist Conference has put in place all necessary changes to bring about the full interchangeability of ministry between our two traditions. It is our turn to follow through with the necessary legislation to allow the full implementation of what was presented to General Synod in the Council's Second Interim Statement in 2011. Mindful that this Statement was warmly received by both the Methodist Conference and General Synod that year, the motion coming before the Synod this year is designed to bring about the proposals welcomed at that time. The Church of Ireland members of the Covenant Council have devoted much of their time and energy this year working on the motion for a special bill in 2014 inserting the proposed addition of Canon 10A. The advice of the Methodist members has also been invaluable, not least in ensuring that we are not proposing to enact anything that has not already been agreed by both polities.

The Council believes that bringing about the full interchangeability of ministry is a vital step on the road to full organic unity, the ultimate goal of the Covenant, and will greatly enrich the life and witness of our churches for the future. I will say more on this in proposing the motion shortly.