

# **EMBRACING THE COVENANT**

**Quinquennial Report (2008) of the  
Joint Implementation Commission  
under the Covenant between**

**The Methodist Church of Great Britain  
and  
The Church of England**

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## FOREWORD

As the Co-Chairs of the Joint Implementation Commission (JIC) of the Covenant between the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Church of England, we are pleased to present the Commission's quinquennial report to both our churches. We believe that this report contains stimulating ideas and challenging recommendations, which need to be studied widely in both churches.

We recognise that some feel that 'the Covenant' has not yet made the difference that they expected in the relationship between our two churches. But the JIC cannot on its own 'implement' a covenant. That can only be done by both churches taking the Covenant to heart and putting it into practice in every area of their lives.

However, in our three reports we have addressed many issues, including those which were specifically referred to us. A covenant by its very nature requires both parties fully to engage and grow into it. In much of our work, particularly through the ten regional workshops for our church leaders, that we organised, as well as in our reports, we have pointed the way ahead and encouraged the necessary changes in thought and practice throughout our churches, in order to allow the Covenant to flourish as a practical reality.

We share the disappointment of others at the slow pace of change in the covenantal relationship between our churches. Yet we recognise how far things have changed for the better in British ecumenical experience in recent years, not a little of which is due to the influence of this Anglican–Methodist Covenant and the work of the JIC. We have been encouraged by many examples of good practice and by the seriousness with which many have engaged in a mutual covenant lifestyle.

We wish to thank all the members of the JIC and its consultants for their collegueship and hard work during the past five years. In an extremely encouraging way the members of the JIC have come together in a covenantal relationship that has brought to us all many gifts and graces from each of our churches. We particularly want to thank the Co-Conveners who have guided the work of the commission.

We commend this report as a further step on the way to the full visible unity of Christ's Church.

The Right Revd Ian Cundy  
Bishop of Peterborough

Professor Peter Howdle  
Vice-President of  
the Methodist Conference 2002-3

## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT IMPLEMENTATION COMMISSION 2003-8**

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## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

Unless otherwise indicated, references to these reports in the text are by paragraph number.

AMC *An Anglican – Methodist Covenant: Report of the Formal Conversations between the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Church of England* (Methodist Publishing House and Church House Publishing, 2001).

SOC *In the Spirit of the Covenant: Interim Report (2005) of the Joint Implementation Commission under the Covenant between the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Church of England* (Methodist Publishing House, 2005).

LGC *Living God's Covenant: Second Interim Report (2007) of the Joint Implementation Commission under the Covenant between the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Church of England* (Methodist Publishing House, 2007).