

Partnership Mission Statement
Propstei of Magdeburg-Halberstadt (Kirchenprovinz Sachsen) and the
Diocese of Worcester

Aim

The partnership between the Propstei of Magdeburg-Halberstadt (Kirchenprovinz Sachsen) and the Diocese of Worcester exists in order to promote and develop links between our two churches. Our framework is the 1988 Meissen Declaration which envisages a stage beyond mutual reconciliation, namely “the reconciliation of churches and ministries within the wider fellowship of the Universal Church” (Meissen 19). As far as possible within the rules governing ecumenical relationships with our respective churches (canon B43 in the case of the Church of England) “we will take all possible steps to closer fellowship in as many areas of Christian life and witness as possible, so that all our members together may advance on the way to full, visible unity.” (Meissen 17B)

Objectives

To achieve this the Partnership will encourage in particular:

- links between parishes/deaneries and Gemeinen/Kirchenkreisen, and also between comparable ecclesiastical units and institutions, including chaplaincies;
- links between officers and departments of the diocesan administration and their counterparts in the Konsistorium;
- links between groups sharing a common concern with the life of the Church (e.g. women’s issues, ecology, industrial mission, church music, children and youth work, ecumenical relations, Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation, education);
- a regular pattern of conferences among the three confessions: (Protestant, Anglican, Roman Catholic);
- theological discussion, in particular of issues engaged in by our churches at a national level;
- experience-exchanges for church workers and clergy, including placements and opportunities for longer-term service;
- the inclusion of information about each other’s life and work in ordained and lay development programmes;
- invitations to participate in each other’s significant occasions (ordinations installation of senior clergy, synods and diocesan conferences);
- the setting of a budget allocation to enable more direct contact, including bursaries for travel for those who cannot afford it;
- opportunities for reflection and prayer (e.g. joint retreats) and exchange of intercession material;
- the annual celebration of the partnership on the THIRD Sunday in September;
- the collection, exchange and, where appropriate, wider publication of information about the partnership.

Strategy

Measurement of progress is not simply numerical – how many parish links there are. Therefore a Partnership Steering Group will be needed not only to promote the objectives, but also to assess progress “on the way to full, visible unity”. The theological principles are clear already: what is needed is practical experience. Therefore each participant in the exchange will be encouraged to report on the joys and sorrows, the possibilities and obstacles in collaborating. The steering Group will hold this information, assess progress and disseminate good practice. It is therefore important for some of the Steering Group to meet their counterparts in the partner-church to stimulate growth toward unity. The review at the end of the agreed period will then be able to draw on evidence of progress towards reconciliation and offer informed comment on the whole Meissen process.

Stuart Currie, Robert Jones, Matthias Sens and Irene Scherz - 8th September 1997