

## **Saint Andrew Declaration: Address to Synod by the Rev Sandy Horsburgh**

“Primus, members of the General Synod, thank you for your invitation to me to address the General Synod. This is the second time I have had this honour and I hope that that in itself is a sign of the growing closeness of the relationship between our two churches.

“Addressing one another’s synods and assemblies is one of the signs of developing unity between Churches, and it was a great pleasure for me that you, Primus, were able to accept our Moderator’s invitation to address the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland just over two weeks ago. You spoke of the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church being more than just friends, more even than best friends, but truly sisters and brothers to one another, and that is a sentiment I wholly endorse and share.

“As we have taken time within the Our Common Calling Process to talk with one another, to work together, to challenge one another, our two churches have grown closer together. The fact that we share a virtually identical Ecumenical Policy is a sign of that. And perhaps most importantly, the fact that so many of our congregations share worship from time to time, and cooperate on projects serving their local communities, and so many of our clergy find genuine support and friendship with one another, demonstrate that we have moved from being neighbours living parallel lives, to friendship, to something deeper as we recognise and respond to our mutual call into the mission of God in Scotland.

“We cannot pretend that times are not tough for Churches in Scotland, and that too has drawn us closer together. We are seeing more and more clearly that we need one another. We need one another’s support and prayers. And out of that need, we find we can be more effective when we work together in our ministry and mission, which of course is not ours but God’s, expressed in different but complementary ways by our two churches.

“Today, you are considering adopting the Saint Andrew Declaration. As you will know, the General Assembly received it with some enthusiasm, helped by the commendation it received not only from you, Primus, but from Bishop Ian as well, who was your representative at our Assembly. It has clearly struck a chord with ministers and congregations of the Church of Scotland, people who are already working together with Scottish Episcopal sisters and brothers, who see so much more that can be done together.

“The Declaration follows very closely the pattern adopted by other ecumenical agreements, notably the Reuilly Agreement and the Columba Declaration. We are, in a sense, in known and trusted territory, following a familiar pattern, a pattern that recognises and celebrates the unique gifts and characteristics of each Church, but points to the core which we hold in common. And it looks to the future, laying the ground for further cooperation in mission and service, building on what is unifying and on what is distinct.

“Members of the General Synod, the decision on whether or not to adopt the Saint Andrew Declaration is yours. Along with your sisters and brothers in the Church of Scotland, I pray that you will do, and that, together, building on this foundation, we will find more and richer ways to glorify God together.

“Finally, Primus, can I just say what a pleasure it has been for me to get to know and to work with John McLuckie as co-convener of the Our Common Calling group. The meetings we have shared both online and in person have been some of the best of my time as Convener of the Church of Scotland’s Ecumenical Relations Committee. As John steps down as ICRC Convener, I know I will miss him, but I also know that I will really enjoy working with Charlotte Methuen as she takes on that role.”

*The Rev Sandy Horsburgh is Convener of the Church of Scotland’s Ecumenical Relations Committee*

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