

## Community of Methodist and Wesleyan Churches in Europe

<b>Name and Contact Details</b>	The Revd Canon Gareth Powell, Secretary of the Conference; Doug Swanney, Connexional Secretary; Both are representatives of the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB) to the European Methodist Council.
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1. The European Methodist Council (EMC) continues to be a place of great engagement and encouragement for our shared witness in our continent. Over the last few years the EMC has been seeking ways of strengthening its bonds as a way to offer a more solid foundation for our shared commitments in mission.
2. To that end work began on a document which would express and enrich our co-operation which would hopefully be accepted by all the member Churches. The result of that work is the 'Community of Methodist and Wesleyan Churches in Europe' which is replicated below.
3. This community agreement does not alter the basis of our relationship to the EMC but strengthens the resolve of the members of the EMC to find new ways of being Methodist in Europe. Whatever political views we may hold, the United Kingdom is not leaving the continent of Europe, so finding ways at this time of showing our ongoing commitment to our sisters and brothers across the water is critical.
4. The Council may recall that further work is still progressing about appropriate support for our work in Europe and that is ongoing through the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee (GRSOSC).
5. The Council is now asked to ratify this community agreement so that it can be signed when the EMC meets next in London from 9-12 September 2017. The information is supplied below:

*In 1993, the "European Methodist Council" was founded with the aim to include all the churches of a Methodist or Wesleyan tradition in Europe, and united churches in Europe that have inherited the Methodist or Wesleyan tradition.*

*The European Methodist Council exists to:*

- *Enable member churches to consult together on matters of common concern;*
- *Enable a stronger Methodist witness in Europe;*
- *Enable member churches to share resources with one another, as the need may arise;*
- *Enable member churches to be more adequately represented in ecumenical and secular bodies;*
- *Enable member churches to share with other ecumenical partners in Christian mission in Europe;*
- *Co-ordinate existing co-operative Methodist work in Europe;*
- *Offer advice to member churches.*

*The membership and the rights and duties are as defined in the constitution.*

*Recognising the purpose of the Council as expressed in 2) we the member churches wish to strengthen the relationships with one another by living in community.*

*As a community of separate churches each with our own unique and shared traditions, doctrines and church discipline we seek to celebrate and affirm:*

- *Each other's Baptism and administration of the Eucharist;*
- *The validity of our respective ordinations and ministries of Word and Sacrament (elder/pastor/presbyter), and of Word and Service (deacon), and each other's polity and ministries of oversight and authorised lay ministries.*

*In seeking to celebrate our common heritage and to be faithful in our witness to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ we commit ourselves to:*

- *Celebrate worship services and the Eucharist together where ordained ministers from member churches are serving together or where ordained ministers from one church are temporarily serving in the other church;*
- *Welcome members from each other's churches as our own members to take part in worship services, receive the sacraments, receive other pastoral services and to participate in the life of local churches;*
- *Offer hospitality towards all of God's children, particularly those affected by global migration;*
- *Fuller participation in God's mission and ministry, through prayer and deeds, and through finding ways for further co-operation including the sharing of resources where applicable and beneficial;*
- *A more effective sharing of ordained ministries in accordance with the discipline of our churches;*
- *Continue to discuss the implementation of the agreement to deepen the relationships and to make the relationship between our churches visible;*
- *Develop co-operation where more than one member church is present in a geographical area;*
- *To strengthen the connection within the world wide Methodist family;*
- *Invite representatives from each other's churches to each other's conferences and synods when appropriate.*

*Approved by the European Methodist Council, Porto, September 2016.*

*To be ratified by the governing body of the member churches.*

6. The Council is asked to ratify the 'Community of Methodist and Wesleyan Churches in Europe' agreement as detailed above before the EMC meets in London in September 2017.

**\*\*\*RESOLUTION**

**8/1. The Council ratifies the community agreement as set out in the report.**

