

REPORT

OF THE

UNION COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE CONVOCATION OF THE FREE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WHEREAS a Body of Christians called the “Free Church of England” assembled and worshipped in this Country in the Year 1844, and continues as a Religious Body to this day, being registered in Chancery by Dead Poll dated August 31st, 1863; such Deed Poll declaring the legal status of the said Free Church of England, and

WHEREAS in the year 1873, a Body of Christians, called the “Reformed Episcopal Church” was formed in America by the Right Reverend George David Cummins, D.D., a duly consecrated Bishop of the Church of God, and in episcopal succession derived from the ancient See of Canterbury, and

WHEREAS a Branch of that Church was established in England in the year 1877, receiving the right of separate existence and self-government, as, and from January of the year 1878, and continues to this day, holding in Trust certain properties for the uses and purposes of the said Reformed Episcopal church, and

WHEREAS the historic Episcopate was conferred upon the said Free Church of England by the Right Reverend Edward Cridge, D.D., of the Reformed Episcopal Church, at a Service held in August 30th in the year 1876, and since that time both Churches have been using similar methods of administration, and holding similar Principles of Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship, and

WHEREAS at the Annual Convocation of the Free Church of England and the general Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church, respectively, convened in accordance with the provisions provided therefor, and assembled at Christ Church, Broadstairs, Kent, on June 2nd in the year 1926, resolutions were passed unanimously in favour of the Union of the two Denominations, and a Committee was appointed to frame the Constitution and Canons for the United Church, to be designated “The Free Church of England, otherwise called the Reformed Episcopal Church in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”, and the Constitution and Canons now submitted, represents the unanimous agreement of the Union Committee, and

WHEREAS the Congregations of both Churches have passed resolutions unanimously in favour of Union, and of the Constitution and Canons now submitted, and

WHEREAS both Churches are similar in character and government? – Episcopal, Liturgical, and Evangelical, and

WHEREAS the Ministry and Orders of Ministry are from a common source, and hence identical in origin and character, and

WHEREAS the Fundamental Principles, as defined in the Declaration of Principles adopted by the Convocation of the Free Church of England assembled in London in the year 1876 are identical with the Declaration of Principles of the Reformed Episcopal Church, dated 1873, and

WHEREAS the Fundamental Principles, as defined in the Declaration of Principles adopted by the Convocation of the Free Church of England assembled in London in the year 1876 are identical with the Declaration of Principles of the Reformed Episcopal Church, dated 1873, and

WHEREAS the Book of Common Prayer of the reformed Episcopal Church has been approved by the Convocation of the Free Church of England, and

WHEREAS the Constitution and Canons framed thereon attached and now submitted are in full conformity with the provisions of the Deed Poll of the free church of England, We, the signatories, unanimously recommend:

- (1) That on and after the fifteenth day of June 1927, the Free church of England, and the Reformed Episcopal Church shall unite as one Church; the United Church to be known as “The Free church of England, otherwise called the reformed Episcopal Church in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”.
- (2) That for the declaration of the Principles thereof, and for the settlement of the Rules Regulations, and Discipline thereof, and the qualification and duties of all the Ministers and Members thereof, the provisions of the eighteen Articles of the Constitution now submitted, and the Canons (numbered one to one hundred and twenty-six inclusive) framed thereon, and the Book of Common Prayer named therein, shall be the Canon Law of the Free church of England, and the Reformed Episcopal Church, respectively, and of the United Church, designated “The Free church of England, otherwise called the reformed Episcopal Church in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”, and shall be binding on all the Bishops, Ministers, and Members of the free Church of England, and the Reformed Episcopal Church respectively, and on all Congregations connected therewith, as published in the Official Year Books of the Free Church of England and the reformed Episcopal Church, dated 1926-1927.
- (3) That the Constitution and Canons framed thereon, now submitted, shall be printed and circulated and known as the 1927 Edition, and that this Report, and the Resolutions adopting same, shall be printed as Preface to such Edition.
- (4) That the Prayer Book named above, shall be certified by the Bishop Primus, and the Secretary of the Convocation, and be printed and circulated as the 1927 Edition.
- (5) That the present Bishops and Ministers of the Free Church of England, and of the Reformed Episcopal Church respectively, shall be declared to be duly ordained and appointed Bishops and Ministers of the hereinbefore mentioned “The Free church of England, otherwise called the reformed Episcopal Church in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”, and further, that the Communicants and Members of the said Free Church of England, and of the Reformed Episcopal church, respectively, shall be deemed, and declared to be, Communicants and Members of the hereinbefore mentioned “The Free church of England, otherwise called the reformed Episcopal Church in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”, and

- (6) That the hereinbefore mentioned Convocation shall be composed of the Bishops, Ministers, and Delegates of the Convocation of the Free Church of England, and the Bishops, Ministers, and Synodsmen of the General Synod of the Reformed Episcopal Church, upon each such person subscribing to the Form of Subscription for Ministers and other Office-Bears, as recited in the above-named Constitution, and
- (7) That the Eighteen Articles of the attached Constitution and Canons (numbers one to one hundred and twenty-six inclusive) famed thereon, and the Book of Common Prayer named therein, with the Rubrics and Instructions contained therein, shall be the Constitution and Canon Law of the United Church, hereby known as the “Free church of England, otherwise called the reformed Episcopal Church in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”, and shall be binding upon all the Bishops, Ministers, and Members of the church, the same having been voluntarily approved by formal vote of each congregation of the Respective Churches, and

WHEREAS the Free Church of England and the Reformed Episcopal Church, can neither change their respective Titles nor recovery their respective properties already held in trust by and for them,

IT SHALL BE DECLARED AND PROVIDED that the several properties held in Trust shall be administered according to the provisions of the said Trusts, by the Central Board, or Committee, or Committees names therein, and

IT SHALL BE FURTHER AGREED AND RESOLVED that the hereinafter recited Constitution, Canons, and Book of Common Prayer, shall be deemed to be fundamental and unalterable, save only in such manner as therein provided and enacted.

The attached eighteen Articles of the Constitution and the Canons (numbered one to one hundred and twenty-six inclusive) and the Appendix with Index shall be considered as part of this Report.

Signed: R. BROOK LANDER;
F. VAUGHAN;
J. LOUIS FENN;
W.E. YOUNG;
J.C. MAGEE;
A.V. BLAND.

June 1st, 1927.