



**No Anglican Covenant Coalition**  
*Anglicans for Comprehensive Unity*  
[noanglican covenant.org](http://noanglican covenant.org)

**AUGUST 31, 2011**

**STATEMENT BY THE NO ANGLICAN COVENANT COALITION  
REGARDING COVENANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION  
PREPARED FOR THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD**

The No Anglican Covenant Coalition is disappointed with the two-page introduction to the Anglican Covenant posted recently by the Diocese of Oxford on its website. *Introduction to the Anglican Covenant Debate* ([www.oxford.anglican.org](http://www.oxford.anglican.org)), prepared by Canon John Rees, is intended to inform the debate at the March 2012 Diocesan Synod. The Coalition believes that the paper downplays both the controversy surrounding the Covenant and the risks inherent in its adoption.

The analysis of the Covenant in the Rees document is consistently shallow and superficial. The Covenant is presented as minor tinkering with Anglican Communion governance, yet somehow still vital to the Communion's survival. Even the observation that conservatives see the disciplinary provisions as too weak, whereas liberals see them as too strong seems designed as a sort of Goldilocks defence of the Covenant's supposed merits.

The Oxford document is consistent with the general approach to promoting the Anglican Covenant in the Church of England by downplaying its significance while claiming that the survival of the Anglican Communion depends on its adoption. While the Church of England is preoccupied with issues such as women bishops, there is a serious risk that the Anglican Covenant will be adopted without adequate or informed debate about the document and the implications of its centralisation for the Church of England and the Anglican Communion. The consistent and erroneous depiction of the Anglican Covenant as largely meaningless and harmless only increases this risk. Comparable tactics were on display a few months ago in the Diocese of Lichfield, where pro-Covenant presenters were given extensive time to sell the Covenant prior to a short debate with alternating pro- and anti-Covenant speakers.

Oxford's *Introduction* contains links to background material, but many of the references are official pro-Covenant propaganda from the Anglican Communion Office and the Church of England. Some warnings about the Covenant are found in General Synod debate transcript, however, and the *Church Times Guide* is properly characterized as offering "strong arguments for and against the Covenant."

Unlike the background material prepared by the Anglican Church of Canada, Canon Rees references neither the No Anglican Covenant Coalition ([noanglican covenant.org](http://noanglican covenant.org)) nor its associated blog ([blog.noanglican covenant.org](http://blog.noanglican covenant.org)). The Coalition's website includes all the references cited in *Introduction to the Anglican Covenant Debate* and more than 150 other articles. Ironically, Canon Rees does not even cite thoughtful pro-Covenant resources, such as the series being published by the U.S. magazine *The Living Church* ([www.livingchurch.org](http://www.livingchurch.org)), which has offered a far more coherent defence of the proposed Anglican Covenant than anything seen from either the Church of England or the Anglican Communion Office.

Fortunately, members of the Oxford Diocesan Synod have time to educate themselves in preparation for the forthcoming Covenant debate. Members of the No Anglican Covenant Coalition encourage them to visit our website and search for other materials, both positive and negative, regarding the Anglican Covenant. The decision about the Covenant to be made by the Church of England is too important to be made lightly.

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The No Anglican Covenant Coalition is an international group of Anglicans who oppose the adoption of the proposed Anglican Covenant.

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