

**A COMMUNION
OF COMMUNIONS:
ONE EUCHARISTIC
FELLOWSHIP**

*The Detroit Report and Papers of the
Triennial Ecumenical Study
of the Episcopal Church, 1976-1979*

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Ecumenical Report of the Executive Council

The General Convention in 1976 resolved that the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations "undertake, through the convening of regional meetings culminating in a special national conference or other appropriate ways, to assess this Church's present ecumenical posture and involvement, to suggest restatement, where necessary, of those essentials to which the Episcopal Church is committed, and to formulate those priorities and goals which can guide our ecumenical activities in the future."

The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) are cooperating with the Standing Commission in this triennial ecumenical study. Each of the three bodies conducts a part of the triennial study in communication with the others, looking towards a national ecumenical consultation to assess the situation, priorities, and goals as a whole. The Standing Commission will carry out the 1976 Convention's further resolution "that a complete report of this study, together with any recommendations, be prepared for and presented to the 1979 General Convention."

Our triennial study comes at a time when many churches are reappraising their ecumenical commitments. Sensing this need, the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Nairobi in 1975 urged:

A reappraisal of ecumenical commitments. The vision of conciliar fellowship at all levels represents a challenge to the present ecumenical situation, and raises a sharp question about the extent to which our ecumenical commitments actually contribute to a resolute quest for unity. We ask the churches to review the pattern and degree of their present commitment to the ecumenical structures at local, national, regional, and global levels, and ask themselves whether these are functioning as means towards unity or as a substitute for unity.

The Assembly also drew attention to the fact that the work of councils of churches, efforts towards church union, and bilateral conversations between world families of churches "do not always assist and enrich

one another but are often in tension with one another." It urged the churches to ensure that "by a concerted action these efforts support, influence and encourage one another."

Early in 1976 the former Executive Council Standing Committee on Ecumenical Relations asked for an evaluation of Council involvement in national and global ecumenical structures. This "Ecumenical Report of Executive Council" grew out of that initiative and now becomes an Executive Council contribution to the triennial study. The Report is prepared for presentation and referral to committees at the February meeting, and suggestions and criticisms will be welcomed before action at the May 1978 meeting.

1. Historical Sketch

Participation and leadership of the Episcopal Church in the ecumenical movement began with the movement itself. A multitude of activities and decisions—national, local, and international—constitute this participation and leadership. Some highlights of this patrimony follow.

The Episcopal Church participated in the first World Missionary Conference in 1910. The first formal proposal for a World Conference on Faith and Order was made by the General Convention in 1910. This Church participated in all World Conferences on Faith and Order and in the World Conferences on Life and Work. The General Convention in 1937 endorsed the proposal for a World Council of Churches (as outlined by the Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order) and the Episcopal Church was a founding member in 1948.

Slower to join the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, the Episcopal Church did so in 1940, and was a member of the successor National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. from its inception in 1950. The World and National Councils of Churches were a way for this church to join Protestant, Orthodox, and Old Catholic Churches in bearing witness to their unity in Jesus Christ, seeking visible unity, and working together. Meanwhile many dioceses and parishes of the Episcopal Church joined state and city councils of churches to cooperate with other churches committed to the ecumenical movement. Many priests joined local ministerial associations.

Councils of churches were not the only way the Episcopal Church participated and led in the ecumenical movement. Earlier the House of Bishops at General Convention in 1886 adopted a platform on which it would seek visible unity with other churches, called the Lambeth Quadrilateral when adopted by the Lambeth Conference in 1888

with slight changes. Though some U.S. churches expressed interest, the fourth point—the historic episcopate—proved to be a barrier with churches that had a different form of ministry.

Efforts to reach agreements with Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Methodists led to no concrete results in the first half of the twentieth century. In 1961 the General Convention voted to join with these and other churches to form the Consultation on Church Union, but a plan of union issued in 1970 failed to gain support. During this time theological scholars were meeting and reading across confessional lines, and bishops and other leaders were forming valuable associations and personal friendships.

Later in the turbulent 1960s, the Executive Council joined with several other churches in forming the Joint Strategy and Action Committee (JSAC) to enable national (and some regional) denominational staffs to collaborate in task forces on urban mission, church development, minority ministries, and other areas of national mission. In the same period the Executive Council joined with other denominations to form Joint Educational Development (JED) for similar collaboration in areas of education.

The Episcopal Church's ecumenical commitment was reflected in the work of numerous Episcopalians. The general program budget of this Church also reflected its commitment. In the 1970s severe reductions in the budget inevitably affected grants to ecumenical structures as well as the number of Episcopalians who could participate nationally. The same thing happened in other U.S. churches. Meanwhile state and city ecumenical structures suffered from budget restrictions in dioceses.

In this same period an increasing number of Episcopalians sought to make ecumenical commitment and action meaningful in dioceses and parishes. In 1974 the spontaneous formation of an association of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) brought local ecumenical developments into focus. This vital network became a major new ingredient in the ecumenical participation and leadership of the Episcopal Church.

2. *Changing Context*

The Episcopal Church with the Anglican Communion continues to participate and lead in the ecumenical movement and in the structures that serve it. As this Church shares in the movement, it gives but it also receives. Renewal of the Episcopal Church depends in part on openness to the ecumenical movement. This Church should question itself again and again about the adequacy of its participation and

leadership in the movement, and in the structures that serve it. But this Church should also question the effectiveness of the structures intended to serve the movement. How do we evaluate their work? How do we measure, in the words of the Assembly, whether they are "functioning as means towards unity or as a substitute for unity?"

Before we can deal with these questions we must take note of significant changes that affect both the Episcopal Church and the ecumenical structures. First are the seismic effects of the Vatican II Council. Not only did the Council commit the Roman Catholic Church to full participation in the ecumenical movement; it brought substantial reform to that Church and so laid a new foundation upon which dialogue with other churches could begin. Anglican, Protestant, and Orthodox Churches responded with changed attitudes and their relationships with the Roman Catholic Church have been transformed. The relationship of the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches in the U.S. has altered to the extent that the Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation believes we are ready to move into new areas of collaboration while we continue to press forward in the dialogue.

A related change is the rise of official bilateral conversations between families of churches. The Roman Catholic Church, accustomed to acting universally, and other world families of churches, diverse in their ways of acting but accustomed to participation in the World Council of Churches, have formed world bilateral conversations. That these conversations should have diverse goals is not surprising. Nearly all assess the situation, mutually describe their history and characteristics, and clarify difficulties and new possibilities in interchurch relationships. Some aim at mutual understanding, others at some form of visible unity. Some develop coordination of relationships between two families of churches and encourage practical cooperation and exchange on different levels.

Diverse as their goals and functions are, the bilateral conversations are responsible for a major restructuring of ecumenical relationships. The different world families of churches, once regarded as stumbling blocks in the way of unity, are now seen in these conversations to be opening new ways to unity. The Episcopal Church has participated in bilateral conversations with the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Orthodox Churches globally and nationally. Dialogue should lead to action, so when proposals for practical collaboration are made, a decision will be needed in each case whether two families of churches or several will collaborate. In any case the world families of churches are a growing reality with an important potential for partnership in mission.

Another change is the growing influence of Orthodox Churches located in the socialist countries of eastern Europe. Orthodox participation is strong in the World Council of Churches, whose largest member church is the Russian Orthodox. After a long time of mutual ignorance and misunderstanding between Eastern and Western Christianity, Orthodoxy is slowly coming forward as a third force in world Christianity with an outstanding theological and spiritual contribution to make to modern theology and church life. The preparation for a "great and holy synod" of all the Orthodox Churches is renewing their synodical consciousness. Issues for the synod include the Orthodox diaspora (New York City alone has ten mutually independent Orthodox dioceses), an urgent problem because large numbers of Orthodox in the U.S. are no longer immigrant churches seeking to establish their own identity but have become integrated into the American scene, and must clarify and implement their mission. A new attempt is also being made in the synodical process to understand the traditions of other churches and to take the necessary consequences for the Orthodox Church.

A change with profound implications is the growing influence of the churches of the "third world" as they assume theological and missionary responsibility. The influence in the churches of deprived and relatively powerless people in "first world" countries such as the U.S. has also grown, sometimes producing new polarizations but also heightening awareness of legitimate diversity. Christians seem to be more aware and concerned for social justice, especially needed by those who are most abandoned, by the exploited, and by those on the margins of society. We note the special attention being paid to issues of participation and partnership of women and men in the Church and the world.

The reassertion of the validity of pluralism is a major stream of change. The more that personal awareness grows and the more consideration is given to legitimate differences, the greater grow the demands of pluralistic options. The question is how such demands can be met within the unity of faith of the ecclesial community, and how such demands can be kept within their reasonable limits.

A change with overtones of paradox is that localism has risen, not declined, in a global age. Obsession with the local sometimes leads to a loss of vision and service, but is inevitable as people use churches for a zone in which responsiveness and responsibility can be experienced. Those who care about the ecumenical movement worry about relations among local churches and then concern themselves with networks and linkages for the sake of a larger world.

Many other significant changes can be cited: almost everywhere one notes new spiritual vigor with renewed regard for prayer, Bible study, spiritual exercises, and for the action of the Holy Spirit within the Church. Significant developments occur in Biblical and liturgical studies and in dogmatic and systematic theology, so that doctrinal discussions involve re-examining questions in the light of both Biblical teaching and inherited traditions of the families of churches. Dialogue between Christians and representatives of other living faiths and ideologies evolves slowly. Charismatic renewal is a force in interchurch relationships. Differences continue in the churches between evangelical conservative groups and those whose primary concern is for social and ecumenical questions, but the former give increasing attention to social, churchly, and ecumenical questions. Within the churches there are traditionalist movements maintaining that the meaning of Scripture and tradition is not rightly transmitted in new prayers and hymns, and in preaching in many churches which is marked by the "spirit of the age."

A most significant change is the rise of a richer model of visible unity which propels the churches beyond such earlier models as cooperation in a council of churches or merger in national united churches. The emerging model, in which proper diversity is protected, is variously named "reconciled diversity," "sister churches," plurality of "types" within one communion, "communion of communions," and "conciliar fellowship." (Study of models is underway in the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations.)

Ecumenists formerly assumed that "confessionalism," meaning the identity of a church rooted in a creedal statement or in a particular historical experience, and the existence of churches such as the Lutheran, Baptist, Roman Catholic, or Anglican, were obstacles to be overcome by "ecumenism." Confessional differences were equated with mutual rejection. This opposition between confessionalism and ecumenism was sometimes expressed in opposition of structures—for example, the World Council vs. world families of churches or the National Council vs. denominations.

A richer model of unity in which particularities of the churches are not blended but reconciled (locally, nationally, regionally, universally) may lead to complementarity of communions in the one body of Christ. When the ecumenical movement, led by the Holy Spirit, reaches such unity in faith and sacraments between the churches that it is possible to re-establish full communion among them, ecumenical structures will cease their existence as having fulfilled their purpose. The churches will find appropriate ways and forms for their "conciliar

fellowship" themselves, and their fellowship will become a normal manifestation of the fullness of the conciliar life of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

3. *Ecumenical Responsibilities in the Episcopal Church*

The Episcopal Church has ecumenical responsibilities in the U.S. and the world as "a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, in communion with the See of Canterbury, upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer" (Constitution of the Episcopal Church).

These responsibilities are carried out according to the canons by the General Convention (legislates) and its Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (develops policy and strategy), the Presiding Bishop of the Church (chief pastor), and the Executive Council (develops and implements program). The national Ecumenical Officer assists the Standing Commission, the Presiding Bishop, and the Executive Council to carry out their responsibilities.

The *General Convention* consists of two houses which sit and deliberate separately: the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies. Either house may originate and propose legislation but all acts of the Convention must be adopted and authenticated by both houses. Each house has a committee on Ecumenical Relations to which proposed resolutions are referred and which reports recommendations for action. Through its legislative process Convention determines ecumenical commitments, policies, and programs of the Episcopal Church.

The House of Bishops meets annually between Conventions and has certain responsibilities of its own. The bishops occasionally state the mind of the house on doctrinal or pastoral issues involved in ecumenical relations, thus setting policy as chief pastors of the dioceses. On some matters they may act as "the body known as the Bishops in Council, as an assemblage of Catholic Bishops, and considering and acting upon matters of duty or responsibility resting on them as a portion of the universal Episcopate . . ." (Rules of Order).

The *Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations* is canonically responsible "to develop a comprehensive and coordinated policy and strategy on relations between this Church and other churches, to make recommendations to General Convention concerning inter-church cooperation and unity, and to carry out such instructions on ecumenical matters as may be given it from time to time by the General Convention. It shall also nominate persons to serve on the governing bodies of ecumenical organizations to which this Church belongs

by action of the General Convention and to major conferences convened by such organizations" (Journal of General Convention, 1976).

The Standing Commission was the result of a merger in 1964 of three former Joint Commissions concerned with ecumenical matters (Co-operation with the Eastern and Old Catholic Churches, Approaches to Unity, Ecumenical Relations). The resolution to merge spelled out its tasks: "to develop a comprehensive and coordinated policy and strategy on relations with other churches, confirming, interpreting, or making fresh definitions in harmony with the faith and canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church, thus involving (a) statements on Faith and Order, (b) theological discussions with other churches, separately or in ecumenical gatherings, and (c) questions of Church law, tradition, and worship, arising in relationships with other churches" (Journal of General Convention, 1964). As early as 1949 the old Joint Commission on Ecumenical Relations was instructed "to see that the church is kept informed as to progress in this field, especially at the grass roots level, and that it be held responsible for maintaining and furthering our close fellowship and cooperation" with the World Council of Churches, "particularly with that Council's Commission on Faith and Order" and the National Council of Churches (Journal of General Convention, 1949).

Today most of the work of the Standing Commission is done through six subcommittees, each faced with a full agenda: Relations with Eastern Churches, Relations with the Roman Catholic Church, Relations with Protestant Churches and other Communities, Unity Consultations, Diocesan/Local Ecumenism and Councils, Wider Episcopal Fellowship. The Presiding Bishop and the Chairman of the House of Deputies are *ex officio* members of the Standing Commission.

The *Presiding Bishop* of the Church, as "the chief pastor thereof," is charged with responsibility for giving leadership in initiating and developing the policy and strategy of the Church "and speaks God's word to the Church and to the world, as the representative of this Church and its episcopate in its corporate capacity" (Canons of the Episcopal Church). The Presiding Bishop assures that ecumenical commitment is manifested in this Church and represents this Church through primatial visits to leaders of other churches in the U.S. and abroad and in ecumenical structures. The Presiding Bishop delegates others to represent him from time to time.

The *Executive Council* is canonically responsible "to carry out the program and policies adopted by the General Convention." It has "charge of the unification, development, and prosecution of the Missionary, Educational, and Social Work of the Church, and of such

other work as may be committed to it by the General Convention." The Presiding Bishop is President of the Council. The Executive Council's Standing Committee on National and World Mission was given responsibility for ecumenical affairs in 1976, and has subsumed the tasks of the former Standing Committee on Ecumenical Relations. The tasks are:

- (a) To keep the ecumenical dimension of the Executive Council's work under review and make recommendations to the Council in this area in accord with the policies and guidelines established by General Convention . . .
- (b) To assist in building working relationships between the Executive Council's program units and the cognate units of the World Council of Churches, National Council of Churches and other ecumenical agencies . . . understanding the importance of our own Church's autonomy in setting its programmatic goals and methods while taking into account the advantages of a common Christian approach to many of the issues and opportunities faced by the Episcopal Church . . .
- (c) To supervise and monitor the programmatic implementation of any applicable General Convention resolutions.
- (d) To advise the ecumenical officer and assistant ecumenical officer on various aspects of their work including programs and activities for the study and promotion of ecumenism, service to diocesan ecumenical commissions, and keeping church people informed on ecumenical developments.
- (e) To maintain liaison between the Executive Council and the Joint Commission on Ecumenical Relations . . . The Executive Council has primary responsibility for *policy execution* in the ecumenical *programmatic* areas as finally adopted by General Convention . . .

The Executive Council is accountable to General Convention and makes a full report concerning the work with which it is charged to each meeting of the Convention. Between sessions of General Convention the Council may initiate and develop such new work as it deems necessary. The Council submits to each General Convention a program for the succeeding triennium, including a detailed budget for the ensuing year and estimated total budgets for the two succeeding years.

The position of national *Ecumenical Officer* was established by General Convention in 1961 as a special assistant to the Presiding Bishop and (as with other Executive Council staff) to be appointed by him.

Today the Ecumenical Office is located in the National and World Mission unit of the Executive Council. The responsibilities of the Ecumenical Officer were spelled out in an appendix to the report of the then Joint Commission on Ecumenical Relations: administrative responsibilities for the Commission, day to day business with the National and World Councils of Churches, keeping the Church at large adequately informed and in touch with all phases of the ecumenical movement, education at diocesan and local levels, apprising the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council staff of matters of importance, deepening and extending the involvement of provinces and dioceses, coordinating the ecumenical activity and work of the Episcopal Church, and planning for its responsible participation in ecumenical affairs.

The Ecumenical Office plans and develops program with the executive for National and World Mission and the staff Administrative Group, under the overall guidance of the Presiding Bishop. Other units of the Executive Council also utilize ecumenical structures to carry out Episcopal Church goals and objectives. Program plans are incorporated in the general church program budget submitted by Executive Council to General Convention through the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance.

The Ecumenical Office plans and develops policy and strategy, under the overall guidance of the Presiding Bishop, to assist the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations to carry out its responsibilities. The Office receives suggestions from various sources, particularly the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers, and keeps the executive for National and World Mission, the Administrative Group, and others informed.

The bishops of the Episcopal Church participate with other bishops of the Anglican Communion in the *Lambeth Conference*, an historic expression of the unity of the Anglican Communion, at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. At two-year intervals between Lambeth Conferences, three clerical and lay delegates from the Episcopal Church participate in the *Anglican Consultative Council*. The Archbishop of Canterbury is president of both bodies. The Anglican Communion has no legislative authority, so the member provinces or churches must decide whether to approve conclusions reached by either body. Both deal extensively with ecumenical policy and their conclusions are influential, particularly resolutions of the Lambeth Conference. The office of the secretary general of the Anglican Consultative Council plans, on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Anglican Communion, theological conversations and ecumen-

ical relations with other world families of churches. The Archbishop of Canterbury's Counsellors on Foreign Relations aid the Anglican Consultative Council in this work. Episcopalians participating in the work are nominated by the Presiding Bishop and appointed by the Archbishop.

Global and national bodies, because of the very way in which Christ is manifested in His Church, are in no way a substitute for the Church in each diocese. The wider bodies afford a process to reach consensus on issues which transcend diocesan and provincial boundaries, a means to promote the life of the local churches, and an expression of unity. The Church in each diocese with its parishes responds to global and national agendas but it has an agenda of its own, an original form of ecumenism springing from the presence of Christ in its worship and life. In many cases this agenda of prayer, dialogue, and service for unity has yet to be developed in light of the particular characteristics and issues of the place where the diocese has its mission and ministry.

It was in pursuit of this form of ecumenism that the diocesan ecumenical officers formed in 1974 a national association of *Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers* (EDEO). General Convention in 1976 commended the new network and "encourages their participation in the expansion of local and diocesan ecumenical activity." EDEO responsibilities are spelled out in its bylaws: to initiate, support, and communicate ecumenical activity at the diocesan and local level, to serve as a communicator for the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations on national and world ecumenical activities and conversations in which the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion are involved, to assist in the mobilization of the church to commitment on every level to the ultimate goal of the visible unity of the Church, and to work to move the church to provide the necessary resources to achieve this goal. EDEO reports both to the Standing Commission and the Executive Council, and suggests to the Standing Commission resolutions for General Convention related to diocesan/local ecumenism. The Ecumenical Office assists in the work of EDEO.

4. *Ecumenical Policy of the Episcopal Church*

The ecumenical vocation of the Anglican Communion is to maintain a dynamic balance, to seek wholeness, to look toward visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship with all Churches—Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox. The 1967 General Convention voiced this historical vocation in a succinct policy statement:

Our ecumenical policy is to press toward the visible unity of the whole Christian fellowship in the faith and truth of Jesus Christ,

developing and sharing in its various dialogues and consultations in such a way that the goal be neither obscured nor compromised and that each separate activity be a step toward the fullness of unity for which our Savior prayed.

The ecumenical policy of the Episcopal Church is the visible unity of the whole Church, but this has never meant that it must wait until all churches reach full agreement before acting. The Anglican Churches have entered into full communion with churches where there is a sufficient unity in faith and sacraments. The Bonn Agreement has been mutually affirmed with the Churches of the Union of Utrecht (Old Catholic) and with the Philippine Independent, Iberian, and Mar Thoma Churches (the case of the united churches of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh is somewhat different as they incorporated former Anglican dioceses). The eucharistic fellowship of these churches and the churches of the Anglican Communion is called the Wider Episcopal Fellowship, though it has not yet received conciliar expression for common counsel and mutual aid.

The Episcopal Church with the Anglican Communion has meanwhile entered and deepened conversations with other major families of churches. Conversations aimed at visible unity exist, in chronological order, with (1) the Orthodox Churches, (2) the Methodist, Reformed, and Disciples families through the U.S. Consultation on Church Union, and more recently with (3) the Roman Catholic Church, and (4) the Lutheran Churches. The stance of Episcopalians in these conversations, reaffirmed as recently as the 1976 General Convention, is that of the Lambeth Quadrilateral and related documents (see *Ecumenical Bulletin* 26). Decentralized conversations aimed at mutual understanding are beginning with Southern Baptists, a part of the largest Protestant family in the U.S.

In this complex process of dialogue the Episcopal Church receives new insights and finds new ecumenical opportunities. Since the Vatican II Council, relationships with the Roman Catholic Church have by all accounts become the principal and most important (but not the only) ecumenical concern of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. Our policy on visible unity of the whole Christian fellowship, including non-Episcopal churches, should not stand in the way of relationships with an episcopal church such as the Roman Catholic. Another example of new perspectives is our conversation with Lutherans, a family of churches (like the Baptists) to which we have not been formally related in the past.

Conversations with these families of churches are financed by the General Convention budget of the Standing Commission on Ecumeni-

cal Relations. In the case of the Consultation on Church Union, while the Standing Commission is responsible for conducting and financing the conversation, the Executive Council is responsible for financing some program implementation. Relations with churches of the Wider Episcopal Fellowship are the responsibility of the Standing Commission for policy and the Executive Council for program, but in this case we deal with mission partnership within the framework of already existing visible unity, or full communion.

What ecumenical policy guides other Executive Council program? The General Convention policy statement quoted above, owing to its context, made no explicit reference to ecumenical activities beyond "dialogue and consultations," yet it seems implicit that all ecumenical participation and leadership of the Episcopal Church should in some sense "press toward the visible unity of the whole Christian fellowship in faith and truth of Jesus Christ." Here we recall the urging of the Nairobi Assembly quoted in the introduction that all ecumenical structures should function "as a means towards unity."

We confront a serious problem at this point. In the U.S. the churches have never had *both* an articulated vision of an ultimate goal of visible unity and a process or way by which unity can be experienced (though not fully) now. This is embedded in our ecumenical structures. Councils of churches had no affirmation of a goal (unlike the World Council), but they did have a process of joint activities. The Consultation on Church Union had a goal, but few experiences on the way.

Two mistaken or partial assumptions may have motivated U.S. ecumenists. The first assumption is that visible unity is a product of doing things together. The mistake is in thinking that unity can be a human achievement. Doing things together can produce new experiences and new relationships between persons, groups, and institutions, but cannot produce the unity created in Jesus Christ. Indeed, when what we do together is authentic it sometimes produces disunity, for example, in work for a just society.

The second mistaken or partial assumption is that visible unity is a matter of reaching theoretical or theological agreement which can then be legislated and the desired change produced. The mistake is in thinking that if we can achieve a consensus of leaders and take it through a legislative process we can produce a new community. Unity is not something we can produce in this way either.

If the churches continue to work in the National Council of Churches only on immediate concerns and have no vision, the churches will continue to deal with a remote goal in their work for

visible unity in bilateral conversations and COCU, and in the National Council they will never give meaning to unity beyond the crises. How can vision and process be held together in our ecumenical structures and in Episcopal participation and leadership? Again we recall the urging of the Nairobi Assembly quoted in the introduction that ecumenical efforts and structures "support, influence and encourage one another."

At the 1976 General Convention the Lund Principle, first uttered by the World Conference on Faith and Order at Lund, Sweden, in 1952 and affirmed by the Lambeth Conference in 1968, was reaffirmed. The Convention resolved that "the Episcopal Church at every level of its life be urged to act together and in concert with other churches of Jesus Christ in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction or church order compel us to act separately." Because the Lund Principle is somewhat vague, the resolution provided a specific means of implementation: "that in all future presentations of budget and program to this General Convention, reference be made to what efforts have been expended to secure data ecumenically and to plan ecumenically." Dioceses were "urged to establish a similar policy of ecumenical review and planning."

The Lund Principle thus became a part of the Episcopal Church's ecumenical policy. It is vital to recall, however, that the Lund Principle uttered in 1952 by the World Conference on Faith and Order speaks *both* of pursuing theological conversations and acting "together and in concert." Action together in obedience to the unity we have goes hand-in-hand with conversations aimed at visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship. We have not yet reached the point where we can ignore the divisions which have separated us for centuries, but even now we must act "together and in concert" and plan together.

This brief look at the Lund Principle suggests an unfinished agenda for Executive Council and its units: to work out what action together and in concert is justified, indeed required by "obedience to unity which is already given" and what action is to be separate because "deep differences of conviction or church order compel us to act separately." It is impossible to make an *a priori* definition along these lines; rather it will be necessary to work it out step by step, decision by decision.

Explicit policy on the National and World Councils of Churches is limited to membership and cooperation through them with other churches (Journal of General Convention, 1949). Because councils have no authority to commit member churches, participation or

agreement in programs, statements, activities, etc. is governed by appropriate organs of the churches.

How should Executive Council make decisions to commit or not to commit? Executive Council and its units should be guided first by policies and positions adopted by General Convention on the relevant social, ethical, educational, ministerial, missional, and ecumenical issues. Since ecumenical participation is a "two-way street," planning in ecumenical structures should be fed back to Executive Council and its units to be used in the continuous process of arriving at new or revised policies and positions which may be adopted by General Convention. Similarly, decisions of Executive Council and its units on grants to ecumenical structures and use of staff and volunteer time should be made in light of Executive Council program goals and objectives. Because ecumenical participation is a "two-way street" here too, planning in ecumenical structures should be fed back to Executive Council and its units to test program goals and objectives and to help in devising future ones.

5. Motivation

In the foregoing description of Episcopal Church life and the structures through which its ecumenical policies are formed and carried out, warnings have been given that Christian unity is not a product of doing things together. It is not something we produce, but rather a gift of God to humankind. In a world capable of destroying itself, unity is not only a gift to the followers of Christ but potentially a gift to all nations.

St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, reminds his followers of this gift: "In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:26-28) Whatever divides us is obliterated by the fact that God has made us one.

Baptism and Holy Communion are the foundation of our union in Christ and the source of our unity with our fellow-Christians, the pilgrim people of God. This unity is obscured by our past divisions into separate fellowships, an estrangement which has made us look upon other churches as enemies or competitors.

The task of restoring relationships is not necessarily to join in one monolithic church structure, but rather to learn to live by what we have in common—our relationship to God in Christ. Among churches this unity in relationships can be expressed and organized in diverse

ways, relying on the varied gifts of the one Spirit to different churches. As Cardinal Willebrands has said, "If we are going to fossilize, common sense would seem to suggest that it is not very important whether we do so together or separately. Unity is vital only if it is a vital unity."

An old haggadic legend tells this tale: "I was walking in the mist at evening, when suddenly I saw a monster looming in the mist. As the apparition drew closer, I saw that he was a human being; and when we came face to face, I saw that he was my brother."

Christian unity is not made by man, but by the discernment given by the Spirit to recognize what we are—what God has made us in Christ.

If the Church is to fulfill its mission to mankind, it must reorder its own life so faithfully that the world may see that Christ is indeed the way, the truth, and the life. So, in his high-priestly prayer Jesus prays "that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:21-23).

The greatness of the mission to which Christ calls us and the future glory of its consummation is, and ought to be, the motivation which impels us to unity with our fellow-Christians in "reconciled diversity." It is in this context that we now turn to a consideration of the Executive Council's involvement in ecumenical action through a variety of programs and agencies.

6. Existing Executive Council Ecumenical Involvements

Evaluation of existing Executive Council ecumenical involvements began in 1976 with a survey of staff contacts (updated periodically). The survey included use of staff time and grants, both important allocations of resources. In general, staff estimates of the value of contacts were quite positive, and there was appreciation of the opportunity to work with other churches. Satisfaction was related to task completion, however, and the inter-church relationship was not regarded as an end in itself.

Staff evaluations of contacts ranged, of course, both for their work and for the general mission of the Church, from the highest possible to nearly the lowest possible ratings. It would be hazardous to suggest any single reason for the ratings, but task completion is a key.

Staff who spent the most time at ecumenical meetings did not complain about the demands made on their time, while those who spent relatively little time complained. All staff live with heavy schedules, so the basic problem is not time, though the small staff has severe limits in this respect. The basic problem is the nature of the work in the Episcopal Church Center. Policy is for staff to focus on dioceses and not on

the Episcopal Church Center. When ecumenical contacts support and enable their work, staff rate them highly and spend whatever time is necessary.

a. World Council of Churches

Fewer Executive Council staff have contacts with the World Council of Churches than before because of the greatly enlarged participation of churches from the third world and the socialist countries of eastern Europe. There are nearly 300 member churches. This lessening of contact is serious because the WCC is an important part of this Church's ecumenical participation: intercontinental, multiracial, transcultural, and interconfessional.

The Ecumenical Office works steadily to increase the number of Episcopalians who have contacts and to enable them to communicate content of meetings and conferences to others. WCC staff visits to the Episcopal Church Center are arranged to strengthen the confidence between WCC staff in Geneva and this Church. We should work with other member churches to make the U.S. Conference of the WCC an effective regional center to enable a wider participation of Episcopal leaders, including staff, alongside leaders of other churches. In some areas of program the National Council of Churches functions on behalf of the WCC.

The WCC should continue to improve communication with its member churches and pay greater attention to ecumenical needs of their local churches (dioceses/parishes). Study of relations between the WCC and the world families of churches has also begun, to see in what further ways the families can act jointly, but progress is likely to be slow. The future of the WCC is less that of an institution embodying the ecumenical movement and more that of an enabler of unity, mission, and service in the world families of churches. New flexibility within the WCC will bring fresh possibilities for increased partnership with churches not likely under present conditions to become members of the WCC—for example, the Roman Catholic Church and evangelical conservative churches, which also embody something of contemporary ecumenism.

b. National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

The main problem of Executive Council staff is that the style and work of some of the committees and staff in the NCCC do not fit with their functioning in Executive Council. In particular, agendas prepared by some NCCC units do not make it possible for them to be in dialogue with people from other churches. Rather than helping the member

churches to develop ecumenically, there is still a desire to own programs and initiative. Executive Council staff have a high regard for inter-church coalitions and a collaborative style, but coalitions are often facilitated by avoiding the NCCC.

A related problem is that the NCCC does not take the local church (diocese/parishes) adequately into account in its planning. One consequence is that it lacks sensitivity to public opinion in the churches. The priorities of NCCC in the 1970s have been in the area of the social implications of the Gospel, yet in the process of developing policy statements and resolutions the NCCC makes little provision for their usefulness in the local churches. The results are often counterproductive because the statements have slight overall impact and much of the constituency considers NCCC irrelevant.

A third problem is that while the last 65 years and particularly the last 15 years have brought an historic ecumenical transformation in most of the churches, the NCCC has hardly changed. A successful attempt of the 1940s and 1950s to structure relationships between certain ecumenically involved churches through practical cooperation was valuable, but this structuring is outdated. The member churches have an opportunity to transform the NCCC into a forum for all churches of ecumenical good will in the U.S. which will call the churches to the goal of visible unity. At the same time it will be important not to lose functions and activities of NCCC that are of value, such as work on the social implications of the Gospel, however NCCC itself is reshaped.

As things stand, the NCCC Governing Board fails to measure up to the Nairobi Assembly's urgings, quoted in the introduction, about unity and about interdependence of ecumenical efforts. Nor does it measure up to the ecumenical policy of the Episcopal Church as described in Section 4. Composed of a limited number of ecumenically involved churches, the NCCC has lost some of its ecumenical credibility. The Governing Board's lack of serious attention to visible unity means that it lacks a comprehensive agenda for mission and ministry. Limiting itself for the most part to social, political, and economic issues, the Board has little or no oversight of divisions and commissions that do most of the work and spend most of the budget.

The future of the NCCC in light of the transformations mentioned in Section 2 is to be reconceived and reshaped by a continuing process as a national "network" serving, but not embodying, the ecumenical movement by interrelating diversities in American pluralistic Christianity. The task of the Council is to maintain and develop networks which are strongly administrative and enabling, to link the churches.

The task of the churches through the networks is to promote the goal of visible unity (in diversity), renewal, and common witness. The network itself is to create interaction without forcing integration. A reshaped NCCC will have a revised constitution with clearly stated purposes on the basis of which member churches can evaluate effectiveness of performance. It will be a modest-sized institution with a servant relationship to the churches.

The NCCC is a significant potential point of convergence for the ecumenical aspirations and activities of Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, and Roman Catholic Churches. Yet it remains only the servant of the ecumenical movement which has a much wider and deeper significance as it penetrates beyond the boundaries of church institutions, quickens universal fellowship among the followers of Jesus Christ, and draws its power from the indefinable presence and activity of the Holy Spirit.

c. Consultation on Church Union

The Ecumenical Office offers this evaluation. Predominant in the 1960s, COCU has less importance in the 1970s relative to other conversations of the Episcopal Church. This multilateral conversation recently produced a theological statement of interest, and continues to sponsor local experimentation through "interim eucharistic fellowship" and "generating communities." A certain ambiguity attaches to COCU and to the churches which formed it because the 1961 charter calls for a "united church truly Catholic, truly Reformed, and truly Evangelical," whereas today the earlier model of organically united national churches is widely questioned and newer models are being developed. A related problem is that COCU, unlike the parallel multilateral conversation of Faith and Order, has not been able fully to include the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Orthodox, Baptist, and evangelical conservative Churches. Yet in another sense COCU is already too inclusive to bring the participating churches into one church organization, for it includes Protestant and Anglican, "free" and connexional, black and white, reformed and evangelical traditions.

The policy of the Episcopal Church is to work toward visible unity of all churches, but more effective ways could be found to work toward closer relations with the Reformed, Methodist, and Disciples families of churches.

The churches which formed COCU need to review its 1961 charter and purpose in light of the ecumenical transformations in the last 16 years, particularly the richer model of visible unity (see the Anglican Consultative Council's response to the WCC discussion of "conciliar

fellowship"). The experience of a search for one singular model may have been only a temporary step in the pilgrimage. Much of what we have learned so far is only part of a new whole, which none of us yet can clearly see. COCU could become the core group to expand mutual recognition of members and ministries, etc. to all ecumenically involved churches. However it is refashioned and used, it is important that we not lose present functions and activities of COCU that are of value.

The National Council of Churches' constitution makes room for efforts toward unity, but does not specify visible unity in its stated purposes (as does the World Council) and has little activity aimed at this goal. All the Churches in the Consultation on Church Union are also members of the NCCC, and it appears that both ecumenical organizations lack what the other has. What steps could be taken to find ways in which these organizations could work together to demonstrate the vital relationship between unity and mission and to be of service to non-member as well as member communions?

d. Joint Educational Development

JED continues to be a viable working group for the Episcopal Church and 11 other denominations. Primarily a task-oriented organization, JED provides a good opportunity for ecumenical working relationships in religious education research and projects. The collaborative style of JED is structured in such a way that it permits members to support joint educational projects or to decline them, depending on their respective needs, goals, and objectives.

JED is presently supporting some 15 projects, five of which the Episcopal Church supports. The projects range from a variety of explorations into new concerns of education to a fully developed curriculum system. Though JED does not belong to NCCC, the two are in constant liaison with each other to facilitate coordination and prevent duplication.

e. Joint Strategy and Action Committee

JSAC causes few problems among Executive Council staff participating in its task forces. The small JSAC staff enables a large number of national (and some regional) staff from 26 denominations to collaborate for strength, using their limited separate resources in study and exploration together, normally carrying out program in parallel but sometimes together. The JSAC style permits the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Lutheran Church to be full members, relating them in mission to member churches of NCCC.

The collaborative style of JSAC should not be lost. It has consider-

able potential in the national mission field and complements rather than competes with NCCC. JSAC is coordinated with the NCCC Division of Church and Society, Commission on Regional and Local Ecumenism, and Research and Planning office. JSAC cannot belong to NCCC because of the membership of non-NCCC churches; on the other hand, its collaborative style is a good example for NCCC program planning.

f. Local and Regional Ecumenism

The Ecumenical Office offers this evaluation. The Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) receive a grant from the general program budget under this title. Since 1974 the EDEO network has worked principally to establish ecumenical officers and commissions in dioceses, report diocesan and local activity through surveys, and see that useful information is shared. In 1977 EDEO began work on its goals and objectives within the context of the triennial ecumenical study. Eight provincial ecumenical consultations are developing "posture statements," officers are working in dioceses to articulate the Lund Principle, and exchange of "working models" is continuing.

Ecumenical work of the Church in each diocese is obviously in the early stages of development and is one of the most important components of this Church's ecumenical program. In some parts of the church the ecumenical movement is still a recent importation, and in all dioceses new generations must be involved for future leadership and commitment. EDEO will be identifying its future work in such areas as: (1) continuing education of diocesan ecumenical officers and commissions under the leadership of the Bishop, and education of the whole *laos* (clergy and laity); (2) processes for dioceses and their parishes to respond to ecumenical agreed statements, not only with theological analysis but with reappraisal and renewal of diocesan and parish life.

7. Future Executive Council Involvements

a. Strategies

Limitations of a small staff and the Executive Council policy to focus on service to dioceses are identified in Section 6. We now turn to financial limitations. If present national economic conditions continue, we should anticipate continuing reduction in the new triennium in what available dollars will buy. It is therefore essential that Executive Council have an ecumenical strategy, a shared vision of what we expect of ecumenical structures and of what we have the capacity to fund.

Over the years the churches have accumulated a large investment in ecumenical structures, but lately they have not been able to meet all the demands that arise and to maintain all the structures at the same level. Choices, admittedly hard, have had to be made. At the same time, people who are proclaiming the Christian Gospel must sometimes, even at great cost, work together. "Bear one another's burdens" (Gal. 6:2). Concentration of our resources is the way through this predicament, to maximize the impact of the dollars and hours that we have to spend. We have asked for an ecumenical strategy, which suggests practical things to be done:

- (1) National, world, and local ecumenical structures have diminished institutionally, and we should accept that fact. We should not try to defend ecumenical institutions, for they do not own the ecumenical movement. On the other hand, if we try to proclaim ecumenism as a movement, as vision, as a process with real involvement, we shall have some success.

It is essential that dioceses and their parishes take initiative to relate to other local churches for unity, witness, and service—so that ecumenical involvement of the Episcopal Church increases and resources are released where they are. Ecumenical structures that support this purpose should receive support. Episcopal Church policy should be developed nationally in the light of local experience.

- (2) Ecumenism, with its emphasis on visible unity, is an essential part of the whole mission of the Church. "The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ" (Proposed Book of Common Prayer). The unity we have enables us to help strengthen Christians of other churches in their mission and be helped in return. A serious problem is that linkages between the churches are still weak. If we ask what should be different about the Episcopal Church's relations with other churches in the U.S. and throughout the world in future, the answer is networks.

It is essential to maintain and develop national, regional, world, and local ecumenical networks among families of churches (a) through existing ecumenical structures and, where they cannot or will not do the job, (b) through direct church-to-church relationships, so that "sustained and sustaining" relationships may increase. Churches may not delegate ecumenism to their ecumenical structures or to programs owned by those structures. The future task of the ecumenical structures is rather to enable conversation, planning, and communication among the churches.

How are decisions to be made for the 1980–83 triennium following this strategy? First we should distinguish between two kinds of “ecumenical money” in the general church program budget. One kind is identified as “ecumenical.” The second kind is not so identified and is dispersed through the program budget. The financial officers have arranged to identify this second kind of money beginning in 1977 so that it will be possible to be informed on all ecumenical spending and to relate it to ecumenical policy and strategy. It will also help Executive Council to report to General Convention in 1979 about implementation of the 1976 resolution of the Lund Principle.

As responsible participants Executive Council contributes to the central budgets of ecumenical structures, but also to selected programs. Who is responsible for planning of ecumenical budgets? We recommend the following:

- (1) Executive Council program units to fund ecumenical programs and projects in their own areas of responsibility because:
 - (a) They have the best judgment on which programs or projects carry out the goals and objectives of the Episcopal Church effectively.
 - (b) The staff person who influences funding will inevitably have greater influence in the decision-making process within the program unit of an ecumenical structure.
 - (c) The decision will be made on the basis that it carries out the goals and objectives of the Episcopal Church, not only because it is inter-church.
 - (d) Constituency support will be developed for ecumenical items.
- (2) The Ecumenical Office to fund the ecumenical networks and the supervising and planning structures which make possible a variety of program collaboration. (Note: Some programs are made possible by support of central budgets without special funding or meetings.)

Following the ecumenical strategy, these guidelines are recommended to those responsible for decisions related to the 1980–83 triennium:

 - (1) In order to concentrate resources and to stimulate ecumenical involvement of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, fund ecumenical networks, modest in size, for enabling and planning.
 - (2) In order to support diocesan initiatives and planning, fund programs nationally and internationally when they have a bearing on the dioceses and their parishes and when they support Episcopal Church goals and objectives.

- (3) Normally expect committees, programs, task forces, etc. which are supported to evaluate their work yearly as a condition of the next year's budget.

Ecumenical structures are remarkably resourceful in developing funding requests. This creates a situation which the supporting churches increasingly resent, of supporting a budget, but then receiving further intermediate appeals for additional amounts. We have recommended that decisions on program grants be made in appropriate program units in accordance with goals and objectives of the Episcopal Church. Nevertheless ecumenical policy and strategy are also valid criteria for evaluation of funding requests. The Ecumenical Office and the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations should stand ready to consult with Executive Council units on requests.

b. Points of Development

There will be continuous and continuing need for dialogue, cooperation, and a forum for the churches. What is needed is an institutional form that makes these debates, agreements, and realities manageable on a continuing basis. Together but independent would seem to fit the needs of all the factors—interaction without integration.

In the 1950s and early 1960s there may have been too much homogeneity in the ecumenical movement, complicated by an integrative bureaucratic style, but today there are new appreciations of cultural diversity, theological expression, “roots,” etc. Ecumenism now admits much pluralism, much diversity, and therefore much dialectical tension. There is only one ecumenical movement, but that movement is neither a monolithic entity nor a univocal process.

The institutional form that best fits these needs is the network of communications, each church being autonomous but providing representation on a continuing basis. Institutionalized locally, nationally, regionally, and universally, the networks can be used by the churches to elaborate strategies to meet various needs of the area and of the individual churches.

A long-term fruitful situation in which the communions can work together will not be served by considering the Roman Catholic and evangelical conservative churches as non-existent. There will be continuing interactions among all communions and among people of the local churches, so institutional platforms should be developed on which issues can be resolved and unity promoted.

Linkages have to be institutionalized if they are to do any good. Institutional linkages within the Episcopal Church need to be developed. The national Ecumenical Office and the Standing Commission

on Ecumenical Relations need closer linkage with program committees of Executive Council. The Standing Commission needs closer linkage with the dioceses and parishes through the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers. The Standing Commission, Ecumenical Office, and Executive Council all need closer linkage with the seminaries. Wherever the linkage is weak, the strength of our ecumenical policy is affected.

Institutional linkage between the Episcopal Church and other churches nationally and internationally exists at present in three different forms, all of which need to be developed:

- (1) *The Wider Episcopal Fellowship*, comprising the churches of the Anglican Communion and 14 other churches having more than 90 dioceses, is one in faith and sacraments and diverse in theological and liturgical expression. Expression of this unity through "conciliar fellowship" and partnership in mission has barely begun and is a major item on the agenda, offering a "working model" of unity.
- (2) *Councils of Churches and Consortia* already function as networks in some respects (particularly consortia) but should intentionally develop this capacity. Yet they are made up of the same limited group of churches, with some extension in the case of JSAC and the National Council's Commission on Faith and Order. When NCCC was restructured in the early 1970s, an ecumenical convocation of all Christian churches in America was proposed. This should be implemented now. NCCC could also serve the churches by forming a network with the Roman Catholic Church for ecumenical planning. The Episcopal Church should offer a strong lead to NCCC and other agencies on functions we need and expect from them.
Efforts are underway through the Anglican Consultative Council to explore partnership in mission with other world families of churches, with WCC enabling the process.
- (3) *Conversations with Roman Catholics, COCU, Orthodox, and Lutherans* are conducted in diverse ways, and are being studied by the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations. Networks linking the Episcopal Church with some of these churches are becoming necessary for partnership in mission in at least some respects. An organized network (oriented to church union) has been in operation with the COCU churches. What emerges as new from the last 15 years of ecumenical experience and participation is a large network of theological conversations with the Roman Catholic

Church. It has become clearer that these relationships cannot be conducted and developed through the medium of the NCCC and WCC, so new institutional linkage should be developed.

- (a) *National* networks for theological conversations with Roman Catholic, Orthodox, COCU, and Lutheran churches are operating (regional networks with Southern Baptists are developing). Networks for pastoral/practical collaboration can be developed with some (linkage committees or task forces), particularly the Roman Catholic Church.
- (b) *International* networks for theological conversations are in operation with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, with participation from the Episcopal Church. An Anglican-Roman Catholic liaison committee and an Anglican-Lutheran joint working group also exist, but participation is mainly from the Church of England. Episcopal Church participation in the latter networks should be developed through the Anglican Consultative Council.

Against a background of changing international conditions, there is reason to believe that strengthening international networks is most important. Primatial and other ecumenical exchanges with churches in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, relations with centers such as the Vatican, ecumenical patriarchate, and the ecumenical center in Geneva, are in this category. Because of the great importance that attaches to relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., the bilateral conversation between the Episcopal Church and the Russian Orthodox is in this category. These networks can pay attention, not only to issues of Faith and Order, but also to building bridges for friendship, peace with justice, and human dignity.

As we do not expect other Christians to be absorbed into Anglicanism or to be absorbed ourselves, our desire is that all should strive in their own traditions to deepen the fullness of their faith in a fully churchly life. No church is asked to uproot itself, to cut itself off from its theological, liturgical, spiritual, and cultural heritage, or lose its distinctive character. Rather, each is to contribute to the enrichment of all. For this reason, the ecumenical movement at its best places emphasis on prayer and fidelity, new life-styles in the Spirit, and the importance of personal contact. Where this is not so, ecumenism sometimes presents a rather barren appearance. Thus the spiritual dimension of continuous prayer, fasting, and meditation should have increased prominence in the ecumenical program of the Episcopal Church on a par with study and reflection on the problems that need

to be resolved on the way to unity and cooperation of the churches in helping humanity solve the problems that confront it today.

New processes are needed for education. The Episcopal Church must develop ecumenical leaders, those who understand and articulate the vision, work it out practically, and put themselves on the line. At the same time, the ecumenical movement must not be restricted to specialists and committee elitists, but must be a process seen as a mission for everybody. The healthy influx of new participants implies that while constantly renewing itself, the ecumenical movement must serve as a seminar where people learn from each other the same things that their predecessors learned. True ecumenical learning comes from personal encounter and confrontation, not only from studying materials produced after past encounters. Finally a new patience is needed with those who have fears. To hear criticism from those who stand apart from the ecumenical movement is an important part of ecumenical education.