

## The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations

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### A. MEMBERSHIP

#### *Bishops*

- The Rt. Rev. William G. Burrill (Rochester) 2000
- The Rt. Rev. C. Christopher Epting (Iowa) 1997, *Executive Council Liaison*
- The Rt. Rev. Edwin F. Gulick (Kentucky) 2000
- The Rt. Rev. David B. Joslin (Central New York) 2000
- The Rt. Rev. Rustin Kimsey (Eastern Oregon) 2000, *Chair*
- The Rt. Rev. Harry W. Shipps (Georgia) 1997

#### *Presbyters*

- The Rev. Dr. Rena Karefa-Smart (Washington) 1997
- The Rev. S. Albert Kennington (Central Gulf Coast) 2000
- The Rev. Lucinda Laird (Newark) 2000 replaced
  - The Rt. Rev. Leo Alard (Texas)
- The Rev. Dr. Alfred Moss (Virginia) 2000
- The Rev. Canon David Seger (Northern Indiana) 2000 replaced
  - The Rev. Elizabeth Z. Turner (Connecticut)
- The Rev. Canon David Veal (Northwest Texas) 2000

#### *Lay Persons*

- Dr. Marsha L. Dutton (Indianapolis) 1997
- Dr. R. William Franklin (New York) 1997
- The Hon. Paul Game (Southwest Florida) 2000
- Mrs. Marge Gross (South Dakota) 2000, *Vice Chair*
- Dr. Alda Marsh Morgan (California) 2000
- Ms. Dorothy Rose (Central New York) 1997

#### *Adjunct*

- Ms. Midge Roof, President EDEO

#### *Consultants*

- The Rev. Canon Ashton Brooks
- The Rt. Rev. Leopoldo Alard (1995)

#### *Staff*

- The Rev. Canon David W. Perry, Ecumenical Officer
- The Rev. Dr. William A. Norgren, consultant to the Ecumenical Office
- The Rev. Dr. J. Robert Wright, consultant to the Ecumenical Office

### B. INTRODUCTION

The responsibilities of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (SCER) are described as follows in Canon I.1.2(n)(3):

- to develop a comprehensive and coordinated policy and strategy on relations between this church and other churches;
- to make recommendations to General Convention concerning interchurch cooperation and unity;
- to carry out such instructions on ecumenical matters as may be given it from time to time by the General Convention; and
- to nominate for appointment by the Presiding Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, persons to serve on the governing bodies of ecumenical organizations to which this church

belongs by action of the General Convention and to participate in major conferences as convened by such organizations.

The formal responses to the Commission's mandates are described in the following pages. We are privileged to present this work to you for your consideration and we wish to say a word about the community we have been in this process.

We are diverse though we share a common Christian faith as members of the Episcopal Church. We come from different places. Our theological persuasions and our different roles in the church and the world depict a varied collage of Christian faith and witness. Our personal faith journeys are distinctive and our professional capacities span a wide and useful spectrum. And through God's call to us to plunge into ecumenical issues we have come to know a unity in Christ which we advocate for others.

In our immersion in ecumenism we have experienced keen scholarship, respect for other faith traditions, spirited debate, moments of transformation, and a deepening of our commitment to Jesus Christ. Such renewal has opened for us new signs of unity and stirring opportunities for pursuing our mission.

The primary focus of our commission's work has been on the Concordat of Agreement proposal between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Episcopal Church. We are grateful to the Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee and to all those of both our constituencies who have labored to bring us to this historic moment in ecumenical relations.

### C. CHURCHES IN FULL COMMUNION

#### **Old Catholic Churches**

Since 1934 and 1940, on the basis of the Bonn Concordat of 1931, the Episcopal Church has been in communion with the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. This ecclesial relationship is a very important one and continues to enrich our sense of Christian unity. During this triennium, the International Anglican - Old Catholic Theological Conference, chaired by the Right Rev. Henry Richmond, Bishop of Repton in England, has not met.

During this triennium the Rt. Rev. Jeffery Rowthorn has represented our church in maintaining communion with the Old Catholic Churches in Europe. The Diocese of Eau Claire has entered a "Joint Agreement" with the Old Catholic Diocese of Germany to enhance communion, fellowship, and mutual spiritual support.

#### *SCER Goals for the Triennium*

1. To maintain and enhance friendships between our two churches by supporting the efforts of the Rt. Rev. Jeffery Rowthorn, Suffragan Bishop for the Convocation of American Churches in Europe.
2. To increase contact between representatives of the Episcopal Church and Old Catholic Churches in Europe.

#### **Philippine Independent Church**

The Philippine Independent Church and the Episcopal Church share full communion. Of particular on-going concern is the relationship of the Episcopal Church to lay and clergy members of the Philippine Independent Church living in the United States. In some instances, members of

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the Philippine Independent Church worship in Episcopal parishes. In other instances, there are PIC congregations served by the Philippine Independent Church or Episcopal clergy and they often share facilities with Episcopal churches. The Rt. Rev. Vic Esclamado serves as the Philippine Independent Church Bishop of the Diocese of the United States and Canada.

The Joint Council of the Philippine Independent Church and the Episcopal Church work to facilitate mutual mission and ministry and communication between the two churches and is especially dedicated to addressing challenges and opportunities that emerge in the relationship of the two churches in the United States. Resolution A027 of the 1994 General Convention directed the Joint Council to propose a common Statement of Mission (based on the 1931 Concordat) to advance the interests and mutual responsibility between the two churches in the USA. The Joint Council began that work in the fall of 1996 and shall complete that Joint Statement of Mission in the Spring of 1997.

### D. OFFICIAL DIALOGUES

#### **Anglican - Methodist**

The current Anglican-Methodist dialogue is at a crucial stage. The Anglican-Methodist International Commission created by the Anglican Consultative Council and the World Methodist Council in 1991, held its third, and perhaps final, meeting at Kanuga in North Carolina in January, 1996. Previous meetings in Jerusalem (1992) and Dublin (1993) had produced an Interim Report which was widely circulated for study and comment. At Kanuga, the Commission, co-chaired by Bishop William B. Oden, United Methodist Bishop of Louisiana, and the Very Rev. Justus Marcus, Anglican Dean of Kimberly Cathedral, South Africa, considered twenty-one responses to the Interim Report from around the world, as well as further thinking by members of the Commission itself. The result was *Sharing in the Apostolic Communion* (London/Lake Junaleska, 1996), a report to the World Methodist Council (1996) and the Lambeth Conference (1998). After extensive discussion of the historical, theological, mission, and polity issues, the final proposals were as follows.

#### *Proposals To Enable Our Two Communion To Grow In Worship, Mutual Care And Mission Together*

The Commission requests the two responsible bodies to adopt the following two resolutions:

- I. As the basis for growth into fuller communion between Anglicans and Methodists in faith, mission and sacramental life, we the Lambeth Conference/the World Methodist Council, together with the World Methodist Council/the Lambeth Conference, affirm and recognize that:
  - Both Anglicans and Methodists belong to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church of Jesus Christ and participate in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God.
  - In the churches of our two Communion the Word of God is authentically preached and the sacraments instituted by Christ are duly administered.
  - Our churches share in the common confession and heritage of the apostolic faith.
- II. In virtue of this recognition of each other's apostolicity as churches, we the Lambeth Conference/the World Methodist Council agree to establish a joint working group:
  - to prepare a way of celebrating this mutual recognition;

- to prepare, in full accordance with the principles agreed in the report of the Anglican-Methodist International Commission, guidelines for procedures whereby the competent authorities at appropriate geographical levels would be enabled to implement:
  - the mutual recognition of members;
  - Eucharistic communion going beyond mutual hospitality;
  - mutual recognition and inter-changeability of ministries and rites;
  - structures of common decision-making.

In August 1996, the World Methodist Council, meeting in Rio de Janeiro, adopted these proposals. The proposals now go to the Lambeth Conference next year and, if accepted, subsequently to the Anglican and Methodist national church bodies for consideration and further implementation.

Episcopal representatives on the Anglican Methodist International Commission were the Rev. Dr. Patricia Wilson-Kastner, formerly professor at the General Theological Seminary; and the Very Rev. Dr. Guy F. Lytle, III., Dean of the School of Theology of the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. During this triennium, several presentations about the work of this Commission were made to a joint clergy conference in Louisiana (Bishop Oden and Dean Lytle); to a forum at Duke Divinity School (Geoffrey Wainwright, Lytle), and at Sewanee (Lytle and Don Armentrout).

The dialogue between the Methodist Episcopal churches (African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and Christian Methodist Episcopal Church) and the Episcopal Church, which had its first meeting in 1992, has not reconvened.

A more positive note is the example of grassroots Episcopal - United Methodist ecumenical work going on for several years now in North Carolina led by a commission chaired by Dr. Patricia Page of Durham. This group met with the International Commission at Kanuga and engaged in useful conversation.

The Church of England is planning to reopen the discussions that foundered in that country in the late 1960's. The future of these discussions could have wide-ranging impact.

Preliminary conversations regarding the start up of a dialogue between the United Methodist Church and the Episcopal Church have occurred. It is hoped that such a dialogue will focus on and connect with local ecumenical activities throughout the United States.

In 1998, conversations between the Episcopal Church and the historic black Methodist Episcopal Churches (AME, AMEZ, CME) already begun under the initiative of Presiding Bishop Browning, should resume again with the goal of establishing a formal and regular dialogue.

### **Anglican - Oriental Orthodox**

During the past triennium there was no meeting of the Anglican-Oriental Orthodox Consultation in the USA or of the international Anglican Forum with the same churches.

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The major ecumenical event involving these churches in the USA during the same period, the first pontifical visit to this country of the new Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, His Holiness Karekin I, was warmly saluted by the Episcopal Church in a luncheon given in his honor by the Presiding Bishop in New York on January 12, 1996. In remarks prepared for this occasion recalling the many past contacts of the Catholicos with Anglicans, Bishop Browning saluted him for his "heroic and timely witness in the land of Lebanon" and said: "Now you face a new challenge in another troubled land as Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians. In humility and admiration, the Episcopal Church wishes to support you in this apostolic task, and it rejects the proselytizing of those churches from outside who would take unfair advantage of a difficult situation. It is our prayer that in this new role your enlightened leadership will flourish, even as it looks to the enlightenment of Armenia itself under your first predecessor Saint Gregory the Illuminator, whom the Episcopal Church now commemorates in its own calendar of saints."

The Episcopal Church and the Presiding Bishop were also represented at two other events of great importance in the life of another of these churches, the Syrian Orthodox Church. Heralding the accession of His Eminence Metropolitan Mor Kyrillos Ephraim Karim as the new Patriarchal Vicar of the Archdiocese of the Syrian Orthodox Church for the Eastern United States on March 3, 1996, the Presiding Bishop said: "You now represent, in this country, an indigenous Orthodox church from the Middle East, a troubled part of the world that is especially prominent in our concern and prayers. The Episcopal Church has had long and friendly relations with your church, and His Holiness, your Patriarch in Damascus, is held in the highest regard among us." Once again the Episcopal Church was represented at the consecration of the new St. Mark's Syrian Orthodox Cathedral in Teaneck, New Jersey, as the cathedral church for the Eastern Diocese, on December 8, 1996.

### **Anglican - Orthodox**

During the last triennium there were no new developments regarding the Anglican-Orthodox Theological Consultation. The dialogue was suspended in 1991 by our Orthodox partners. Several attempts have been made to get the dialogue organized and moving again, and while the situation now looks promising, no official meetings of the consultation have been held since its suspension. Most recently, the retirement of Archbishop Iakovos in the Summer of 1996 precluded the possibility of any meetings. The new primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, Archbishop Spyridon, was enthroned in September.

While the official dialogue has been dormant, a number of unofficial contacts to maintain good relationships with our oldest ecumenical partner have occurred. On-going contacts with the Ecumenical Patriarchate have been cordial and helpful. At the present time, the situation looks promising for a resumption of the dialogue.

### **Anglican - Roman Catholic**

The Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue in the United States has met four times during the last triennium. Having passed through a season of easy enthusiasm and hope, the dialogue has moved to a deeper and more demanding level.

A joint pilgrimage of Roman Catholic and Episcopal bishops to Rome and Canterbury in November 1994 functioned as an important sign of the commitment of our two churches to our

ongoing dialogue toward full communion between us. In the course of these bishops' meetings, both with the Archbishop and Pope John Paul II, the commitments of the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church to overcoming the remaining barriers to our full communion with one another were reaffirmed.

We have been further encouraged by the Vatican's acceptance of the elucidations to the Final Report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission II with the declaration "no further clarification is needed at this time."

The Archbishop of Canterbury's visit to the Pope in December 1996 and the joint statement that issued from that visit affirm the work of ARCIC I and II, stating that the agreed statements that have issued from our international dialogue deserve to be more widely known and require analysis, reflection, and response. It further states, "It may be opportune at this stage in our journey to consult further about how the relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church is to progress. At the same time, we encourage ARCIC to continue and deepen our theological dialogue."

In the Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, the Pope calls for "fraternal dialogue" on the ministry of the Bishop of Rome in the service of unity. This invitation to reflect upon the exercise of the Petrine office in the life of the larger church was renewed during the Archbishop's visit: "Without renouncing in any way what is essential to this ministry in accordance with Christ's will, may we together discover the forms in which it will be accepted by all Christians as a service of love."

The joint declaration of the Pope and the Archbishop that we must "continue and deepen our theological dialogue" and seek further convergence on authority in the church provided a renewed impetus for our work in the U.S. and our commitment over the next three years to explore the questions of ecclesiology, the sources and exercise of authority in our two ecclesial communities, the relationship between the local and universal church, ways of discerning the movement of the Spirit in the life of the household of faith, and the nature of catholicity and the degree of agreement and communion we as Anglicans and Roman Catholics already share.

In this work ahead of us, we hope to be working in close collaboration with the ecumenical officers of our several dioceses and drawing upon the rich experience of our two churches at the local level.

In this regard, we call upon dioceses that have covenant relationships with Roman Catholic dioceses to accept the request of the Pope and the Archbishop to analyze, reflect upon, and respond to the agreed statements produced by ARCIC II "on salvation and the Church, the understanding of Church as communion, and on the kind of life and fidelity to Christ we seek to share."

We note the new direction of the Anglican Centre in Rome, which will soon be moving into larger quarters, and its important role as a visible presence as well as a place of meeting and study. Cardinal Edward Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, has stressed the importance of the Centre and its work, and the Archbishop of Canterbury has pledged the support

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of the Anglican Communion through the year 2000. At present, the Presiding Bishop, and Episcopal dioceses, parishes, and individuals contribute only \$20,000 in annual support.

### *SCER Goals for the Triennium*

1. In the United States, determine with Roman Catholic leadership realistic goals and methods of dialogue in light of the impasse on reconciliation of ministries given recent statements on “infallibility” of the ban on the ordination of women. Face honestly what the Vatican is calling “the new situation.”
2. Determine an Anglican policy toward Rome if there is continued Roman silence on the issue of Anglican orders.
3. Determine a long term strategy for dealing with transfers of ecclesiastical obedience in both directions.
4. Continue to participate in, and develop financial support for, the Anglican Centre in Rome.
5. Encourage dioceses which have covenant relationships with Roman Catholic dioceses to study and respond to the agreed statements of ARCIC II, EDEO, and NADEO to coordinate this process.

### **Consultation On Church Union**

After more than thirty years of conversations, the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) presented two documents for study and action to the nine participating churches: African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, The Episcopal Church, International Council of Community Churches, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church. Eight of these churches have taken legislative action at the national level. All eight have affirmed the plan for “covenant communion” although some have done so with questions or reservations.

At the 1994 General Convention, the Episcopal Church said that it is “not ready” to enter into covenant communion and has expressed a number of “reservations” about the two documents *THE COCU CONSENSUS* and *CHURCHES IN COVENANT COMMUNION*. Past General Conventions have also affirmed the Episcopal Church’s intent to remain a part of the continuing dialogue with the other eight churches.

A plenary meeting of the delegates from the nine churches is scheduled for December 9-13, 1998 in St. Louis, Missouri, to consider and act upon the official responses of the nine churches.

### *SCER Goals for the Triennium*

1. Continue to receive responses to the COCU documents from the Inter-Anglican Office of the Anglican Consultative Council.
2. Send a delegation representing the theological spectrum of the Episcopal Church to the 1998 COCU plenary meeting.
3. Request the new Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies, in consultation with SCER to appoint a committee representing the theological spectrum of the church to study the COCU documents in light of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, identifying in the documents convergence with and divergence from the Quadrilateral, and advise the SCER on appropriate actions the church might take.

4. Request the new Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Commission to place on the agenda the development of a joint Lutheran-Episcopal approach to COCU.
5. Continue to explore the possibilities of bilateral conversations with the United Methodist Church and the historic black Methodist Episcopal churches while informing the COCU Executive Committee that the SCER regards these conversations as enhancing our participation in the COCU process.

### **Lutheran - Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee**

When the *Concordat of Agreement*, whereby it is proposed that The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America enter into full communion, was first presented to the 1991 General Convention, a Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee was appointed. That committee was charged with responsibility for implementing the following goals:

1. to assist the two churches in understanding and in moving towards full communion, and in the reception of the *Concordat of Agreement* and its accompanying theological document, *Toward Full Communion*;
2. to continue to explore and to recommend ways of implementing the 1982 Joint Agreement, including reception of *Implications of the Gospel*;
3. to assist in developing processes and resources for a study of the above-mentioned documents;
4. to interpret the relationship between full communion and mission, as set forth in the above mentioned documents;
5. to facilitate communication among all expressions of the two churches (national, synodical, diocesan, local) regarding proposals put forth by Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue III, responses to the proposals, and implications of the proposals; and
6. to interpret the proposals put forth by Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue III within the wider ecumenical context, seeking comments and response from other ecumenical partners and comments and response from inter-Anglican bodies (e.g., Anglican Consultative Council) and inter-Lutheran bodies (e.g., Lutheran World Federation); and to be sensitive to areas of dissent and concern within our two churches.

During the six years since 1991, the Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee has met ten times and at each meeting has sought to give due attention to each of the six goals. The committee could not have done so, without the generous and whole-hearted support of the network of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers and of those other people who have so well served the church through its Ecumenical Office.

As the following three resolutions indicate, our two churches come now to a point of historic and consequential decision. It is fair to say that we would not be at this point of decision were it not that Anglicans and Lutherans, though dissimilar in important respects, have long recognized something of themselves in each other, perhaps because worship has always figured largely in the identity and character of each tradition. Perhaps it is also because the architects of our two churches' reformations, in England and on the continent, were concerned to uphold the catholic faith. Thus it is no accident that official ecumenical conversations between Lutherans and Anglicans date back to the late nineteenth century.

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The following narrative describes a number of important events in the discussions that have resulted in the proposal for full communion between The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

- a. *Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue I (1969-1972)* The Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue I began in the U.S. in 1969, before the Anglican-Lutheran International Conversations. It resulted in *Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue: A Progress Report*, which recommended “continuing joint theological study and conversations” and offered specific proposals for limited inter-communion and mutual ecclesial recognition.
- b. *Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue II (1976-1980)* The Lutheran and Episcopal churches then authorized Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue II. This dialogue issued *Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue: Reports and Recommendations* and joint statements on justification, the Gospel, eucharistic presence, the authority of Scripture, and apostolicity.
- c. *The Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement* In 1982, The Episcopal Church, The American Lutheran Church, The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and the Lutheran Church in America took official action to enter into an agreement on “Interim Sharing of the Eucharist.” This meant, among other things, that the churches recognized each other as churches “in which the Gospel is preached and taught” and encouraged the development of common Christian life throughout their respective churches. The churches also called for a third series of dialogues to resolve other outstanding questions before they could enter into full communion (*communio in sacris* or pulpit and altar fellowship), which was the goal of the 1982 agreement. The topics for the third series were the implications of the Gospel; the historic episcopate; and ordering of ministry (bishops, priests, and deacons) in the total context of apostolicity. The Episcopal participants wanted greater agreement on the ordering of the church as the community of faith. The Lutheran participants wanted greater clarity on the claim that the churches shared sufficient agreement on the Gospel to enter into eucharistic fellowship.
- d. *Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue III (1983-1991)* The Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue III produced two major reports. (1) *Implications of the Gospel* (with a study guide) discusses the implications of the Gospel for the faith, contemporary life, and mission of the two churches. It describes how Lutherans and Episcopalians can faithfully articulate the Gospel together in contemporary society. Recommendations for action in the areas of worship, ecumenism, evangelism, and ethics were offered to the churches. (2) *Toward Full Communion and Concordat of Agreement* addresses the implications of the proposal for full communion. The preface to the Concordat defines full communion as it appeared in the report of the international Anglican-Lutheran Joint Working Group in 1983. This definition is in accord with *Ecumenism: The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1991)* and the *Declaration on Unity* of the Episcopal Church (1979).
- e. *Episcopal Church Study of the Lutheran-Episcopal Proposals (1988-1996)* The 1988 General Convention directed the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations to devise a process of study and evaluation of the agreed statement *Implications of the Gospel*. The 1991 General Convention affirmed the text as “a faithful witness to the Gospel and as a step beyond the Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement of 1982 toward the goal of full communion. The same General Convention directed the Standing Commission to develop a study of “the Theological soundness and ecumenical appropriateness” of *Toward Full Communion and Concordat of Agreement*, asked Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers to give special attention to the training of diocesan leaders of the study, referred the text to the Anglican

Consultative Council (which sent it to all Provinces of the Communion with a request for an advisory response), and called upon the Standing Commission to appoint representatives for a Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee. The Coordinating Committee and the two ecumenical offices prepared various resources for study, numerous conferences took place, and the two churches sponsored two consultations. The first consultation dealt with the implications for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America of possible action on the two proposals for full communion, the *Concordat of Agreement*, and *A Common Calling*, between the ELCA and three Reformed Churches, in the context of wider involvements of the churches in Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry and the Consultation on Church Union. The second consultation focused on ecumenical relations of the Lutheran and Episcopal churches with the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches and included Methodist and Reformed participants. In addition, extensive discussions have taken place with key leadership groups, such as the House of Bishops and the seminaries.

f. *Joint meeting of the House of Bishops and the Conference of Bishops* In October 1996, the House of Bishops met jointly with the ELCA's Conference of Bishops to discuss the proposal for full communion. During the course of in-depth discussion of issues and opportunities related to this decision, the Conference of Bishops developed a list of issues that it requested the Coordinating Committee to address at its October 31 - November 3, 1996, meeting. A positive response to this communication from the ELCA bishops was prepared by the Lutheran- Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee. The final text of the Concordat takes account of the widespread discussions in both churches.

British and Irish Anglican churches, together with Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches, have been engaged in a parallel journey toward communion. That journey has now borne fruit in what is known as the Porvoo Common Statement, named for the cathedral town in Finland where agreement was reached between representatives of the twelve churches, ten of which have adopted it and are now in communion.

#### *Full Communion Defined*

Full communion as defined by the Concordat of Agreement is not merger, but communion. It conforms to the 1979 General Convention *Declaration on Unity* and to the Cold Ash Declaration of 1983; communion should be understood to mean a sharing of gifts and a commitment to sharing the challenge of mission at every level of the church's life.

The gifts we share are ones that have shaped the identity of our two churches for more than four hundred years. For Episcopalians, the gift to be shared is the historic episcopate, a means whereby the faith and ministry of the church catholic has been handed on from generation to generation. For Lutherans, the gift to be shared is their church's historic emphasis on catechesis and apostolic doctrine, as represented in the Augsburg Confession. The two churches are of one mind in recognizing the pivotal importance of apostolic succession, even though this commitment to keeping faith with the teaching and practice of the apostles has heretofore been expressed in different ways.

Both the Anglican emphasis on the historic episcopate and an ordered ministry and the Lutheran emphasis on a full understanding of Gospel, of doctrine, and of justification by faith need to be

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understood as gifts, given by God with the intention that the gifts be shared with one another and in order that the good news of God in Christ may be more truly proclaimed by word and example.

Full communion as proposed in the Concordat of Agreement conforms to the Quadrilateral of Articles set forth in Resolution Eleven of the Lambeth Conference of 1888 as “a basis on which approach may be by God’s blessing made towards Home Reunion.” The fourth of the Quadrilateral’s four Articles, “The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 877), is related to the second of the three resolutions below. It is the phrase “locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples” that will help to explain the differences between the aforementioned Porvoo Common Statement and the full communion that is proposed in the Concordat of Agreement. While the European and American contexts are noticeably different, the goal of communion has guided each of the proposals.

Three resolutions are presented to this 72nd General Convention. The first is to accept “as a matter of verbal content as well as in principle” the Concordat of Agreement and to agree “to make those legislative, canonical, constitutional, and liturgical changes necessary to implement full communion between the two churches, as envisioned in the Concordat of Agreement.” This first resolution is a common resolution; that is, the same resolution is put before both the General Convention and the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The second resolution enacts a temporary suspension, in this case only, of the seventeenth-century restriction as to who may exercise ordained ministries in this church. It implements the commitment set forth in the first resolution to make the changes necessary for entering into full communion. The suspension is directly linked to the acceptance of the authenticity of existing ordained Lutheran ministries and to the agreement on the historic episcopate and the threefold ministry that has been reached in the Concordat of Agreement.

Because temporary suspension of a portion of the Preface to the Ordination Rites--or for that matter, anything having to do with the Book of Common Prayer--is a constitutional matter, the action of two successive General Conventions (1997 and 2000) is required.

The third resolution provides that no additional declaration be required of ELCA pastors who officiate temporarily in the Episcopal Church; that is, the Episcopal Church will respect the ordination vow made by Lutheran pastors, though pastors who wish to transfer permanently would be expected to subscribe to the declaration required of Episcopal priests. The text of the vow required of Lutheran pastors at ordination states:

The Church in which you are to be ordained confesses that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God and are the norm of its faith and life. We accept, teach, and confess the Apostles’, the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds. We also acknowledge the Lutheran Confessions as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the Holy Scriptures. Will you therefore preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scripture and these creeds and confessions? (*Occasional Services, A Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*, page 194)

It is of utmost importance that deputies and bishops understand that the first and common resolution is the decisive one. If it is not the will of the General Convention that the Episcopal Church enter into full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, then the time for saying “no” is in 1997. For if both the Episcopal and Lutheran Churches say “yes” in 1997 and then the Episcopal Church were to reverse its decision on suspending a portion of the Preface to the Ordination Rites in 2000, the result would be an ecumenical tragedy with long standing consequences.

In the five years since the Concordat of Agreement was first published and referred to each church for study, a recurring question has been, “How will full communion enhance the mission of the Church?” The prayer of Jesus answers the question: “As you, Father, are in me and I in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:21). Urgings that the Church be one appropriately exist within the context of its mission.

Three reflections on the connection between unity and mission are worth pondering:

1. full communion has the potential for opening up a wide range of avenues for joint strategy and action, locally, regionally, and nationally;
2. a fragmented and fragmenting world needs signs of encouragement that communities that have lived alongside but separated from each other can actually be reconciled (Eph. 2: 13-16); and
3. full communion will lend new energy and vision to other ecumenical dialogues, with Roman Catholics, with the Orthodox churches, and with still other churches whose roots lie in the Protestant Reformation.

The full text of the Concordat of Agreement together with an introduction prepared by the Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee follows the resolutions. Published originally in 1991, the Concordat has been slightly amended to address concerns raised during the October 1996 joint meeting of Episcopal and Lutheran bishops and in the process of study in both churches.

#### **Resolution A018 Concordat of Agreement**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 72nd General Convention of the Episcopal
- 2 Church accepts, as a matter of verbal content as well as in principle, the *Concordat of Agreement*,
- 3 as set forth below; and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That this 72nd General Convention of the Episcopal Church agrees to make those
- 5 legislative, canonical, constitutional, and liturgical changes necessary to implement full
- 6 communion between the two churches, as envisioned in the *Concordat of Agreement*.

#### **Resolution A019 Enact Temporary Suspension**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 72nd General Convention of the Episcopal
- 2 Church, having affirmed in the Concordat of Agreement the full authenticity of existing ordained
- 3 ministries in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, having reached fundamental
- 4 agreement in faith with the same church, and having agreed that the threefold ministry of bishops,
- 5 presbyters, and deacons in historic succession will be the future pattern of the one ordained
- 6 ministry shared corporately within the two churches in full communion, hereby enacts a temporary
- 7 suspension, in this case only, of the seventeenth-century restriction that “no persons are allowed

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8 to exercise the offices of bishop, priest, or deacon in this Church unless they are so ordained, or  
9 have already received such ordination with the laying on of hands by bishops who are themselves  
10 duly qualified to confer Holy Orders,” as set forth in the Preface to the Ordination Rites (Book of  
11 Common Prayer 510).

### **Resolution A020 Amend Constitution, Article VIII: Requisites for Ordination, First Reading**

1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 72nd General Convention of the Episcopal  
2 Church add a paragraph to the Constitution, Article VIII, as follows:

3 *A bishop may permit a minister ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America who*  
4 *has made the promise of conformity required by that Church in place of the foregoing declaration*  
5 *to officiate on a temporary basis as a minister of this church.*

### **INTRODUCTION AND CONCORDAT OF AGREEMENT**

The purpose of this *Concordat of Agreement* is to achieve full communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Church. Our churches have set this goal in response to our Lord’s prayer that all may be one. Our growing unity is urgently required so that our churches will be empowered to engage more fully and more faithfully the mission of God in the world.

I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me (John 17:20-21).

The Concordat is the latest stage in a long history of ecumenical dialogue between the two churches. Although the issues that gave rise to the Protestant Reformation, in England and on the European continent, were dissimilar in some respects, Anglicans and Lutherans have long recognized something of themselves in each other, and our churches have never issued condemnations against one another. Liturgical and sacramental worship has always figured largely in the identity and character of each tradition. Moreover, the architects of reformation, both in England and on the continent, were concerned to uphold the catholic faith. Thus it is no surprise that official ecumenical conversations between Lutherans and Anglicans date back to the late nineteenth century.

The first official conversation in this century involving Anglicans and Lutherans in the U.S.A. took place in December, 1935, between The Episcopal Church and The Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, a church with its roots in Sweden. In 1969, the first of three rounds of Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue began.\* Periodic reports were submitted to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its predecessor bodies and to The Episcopal Church. Two final reports, *Implications of the Gospel* and “*Toward Full Communion*” and “*Concordat of Agreement*,” were submitted in 1988 and 1991 respectively.

Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue was coordinated through the Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Consultative Council with the Anglican-Lutheran International Conversations, the European Regional Commission, and other national and local dialogues. Consultations were held

as well with other churches and traditions in dialogue with Lutherans and Anglicans. *The Niagara Report* of 1988 was an important step along the way.

In 1996, the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran and the British and Irish Anglican churches entered communion on the basis of agreement in The Porvoo Common Statement. Earlier, in 1988, the Evangelical Church in Germany and the Church of England agreed on steps to closer relations on the basis of The Meissen Declaration. Anglican and Lutheran churches in Canada, in Southern and Eastern Africa, and in Asia have initiated dialogue and begun to share in mission. These actions help to prepare us and, indeed, other churches committed to the ecumenical movement, to go beyond present separatism and division.

This *Concordat of Agreement* describes the actions of the two churches that will bring them into full communion: agreement in the doctrine of the faith, which opens the way to mutual recognition of churches and sacraments, to affirming the full authenticity of existing ordained ministers, to sharing in the ordination installation of future bishops with recognized means of collegial and conciliar consultation to express and strengthen *koinonia* (communion) and enable common witness, life, and service. The purpose of full communion is that visible unity in mission which Christ wills for his people.

The conviction that underlies this endeavor is that each of the two churches has received a gift, not of its own deserving and certainly not for its own possession, but as the free gift of God's grace. What each of the churches must now ask, as it considers this Concordat, is how it can receive the gift freely given the other for the good of Christ's church. Both the Anglican emphasis on the historic episcopate and an ordered ministry, and the Lutheran emphasis on a full understanding of the doctrine of the faith, need to be appreciated as gifts, given by God with the intention that the gift be shared with one another, and in order that the good news of God in Christ may be more truly proclaimed by word and example.

Our churches have discovered afresh our unity in the gospel and our commitment to the mission to which God calls the church of Jesus Christ in every generation. Unity and mission are organically linked in the Body of Christ, the church. All baptized people are called to lives of faithful witness and service in the name of Jesus. Indeed, the baptized are nourished and sustained by Christ as encountered in Word and Sacrament. Our search for a fuller expression of visible unity is for the sake of living and sharing the gospel. Unity and mission are at the heart of the church's life, reflecting thereby an obedient response to the call of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Many years of thorough and conscientious dialogue have brought our churches to this moment. The history of how far our churches have already traveled together is significant. It guides us on a common path toward the unity for which Christ prayed.

***Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee***

**The Episcopal Church**

The Rt. Rev. Edward Jones (*co-chair*)

Indianapolis, Indiana

The Rev. Dr. O. C. Edwards, Jr.

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Weaverville, North Carolina  
The Rev. Dr. Rena Karefa-Smart  
Washington, D.C.  
The Rev. Dr. Alfred A. Moss Jr.  
Arlington, Virginia  
The Rev. Dr. William A. Norgren (*staff*)  
New York, New York  
The Rev. Canon David W. Perry (*staff*)  
New York, New York  
Ms. Midge Roof  
Danville, Indiana  
The Rev. Dr. J. Robert Wright  
New York, New York

### **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

The Rev. Dr. Richard L. Jeske (*co-chair*)  
Saratoga, California  
The Rev. Paul J. Blom, Bishop  
Houston, Texas  
The Rev. Susan L. Gamelin  
Atlanta, Georgia  
The Rev. Dr. Daniel F. Martensen (*staff*)  
Chicago, Illinois, participating after November 1, 1995  
The Rev. Dr. William G. Rusch (*staff*)  
New York, New York, participating prior to November 1, 1995  
The Rev. Dr. Merlyn E. Satrom  
St. Paul, Minnesota  
Dr. Darlis J. Swan (*staff*)  
Chicago, Illinois  
Sister Cecilia R. Wilson  
New York, New York  
Dr. Sarah W. Wing  
Bellevue, Washington

November 2, 1996  
*Waycross*  
Morgantown, Indiana

\*The churches participating in the first two rounds of dialogue are identified in "*Toward Full Communion*" and "*Concordat of Agreement*," p. 11, and the participants are identified in the same publication on p. 82, Notes 1 and 2.

CONCORDAT OF AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND THE  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
(OFFICIAL TEXT)

**Preface**

The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations of The Episcopal Church and the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America propose this *Concordat of Agreement* to their respective churches for consideration and action by the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in implementation of the goal mandated by The Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement of 1982. That agreement identified the goal as “full communion (*communio in sacris*/altar and pulpit fellowship).”<sup>1</sup> As the meaning of full communion for purposes of this Concordat of Agreement, both churches endorse in principle the definitions agreed to by the (international) Anglican-Lutheran Joint Working Group at Cold Ash, Berkshire, England, in 1983,<sup>2</sup> which they deem to be in full accord with their own definitions given in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s document, “Ecumenism: The Vision of the ELCA” (1991), and given in the “Declaration on Unity” of The Episcopal Church (1979).<sup>3</sup>

**Text**

1. The Episcopal Church hereby agrees that in its General Convention, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America hereby agrees that in its Churchwide Assembly, there shall be one binding vote to accept or reject, as a matter of verbal content as well as in principle, and without separate amendment, the full set of agreements to follow. If they are adopted by both churches, each church agrees to make those legislative, canonical, constitutional, and liturgical changes that are necessary and appropriate for the full communion between the churches which these agreements are designed to implement without further vote on the *Concordat of Agreement* by either the General Convention or the Churchwide Assembly.

As churches consisting of baptized Christians who are diverse but one in Christ, The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are committed to increasing partnership in the mission of witness and service through all their members. Toward that end, these churches declare their intent to continue in sacramental sharing and to move toward the realization of full communion through the following actions.

**A. Actions of Both Churches**

*Agreement in the Doctrine of the Faith*

2. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Church hereby recognize in each other the essentials of the one catholic and apostolic faith as it is witnessed in the unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Small Catechism, and The Book of Common Prayer of 1979 (including “Ordination Rites” and “An Outline of the Faith”), and also as it is summarized in part in *Implications of the Gospel* and *Toward Full Communion between the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the reports of Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue III, and as it has been examined in the papers and fourteen official conversations of Series III.<sup>4</sup> Each church also promises to require its ordination candidates to study each other’s basic documents.

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We hereby endorse the international Anglican-Lutheran doctrinal consensus which has been summarized as follows:

We accept the authority of the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We read the Scriptures liturgically in the course of the church's year.

We accept the Niceno-Constantinopolitan and Apostles' Creeds and confess the basic Trinitarian and Christological Dogmas to which these creeds testify. That is, we believe that Jesus of Nazareth is true God and true Man, and that God is authentically identified as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Anglicans and Lutherans use very similar orders of service for the Eucharist, for the Prayer Offices, for the administration of Baptism, for the rites of Marriage, Burial, and Confession and Absolution. We acknowledge in the liturgy both a celebration of salvation through Christ and a significant factor in forming the *consensus fidelium*. We have many hymns, canticles, and collects in common.

We believe that baptism with water in the name of the Triune God unites the one baptized with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, initiates into the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church, and confers the gracious gift of new life.

We believe that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, distributed, and received under the forms of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. We also believe that the grace of divine forgiveness offered in the sacrament is received with the thankful offering of ourselves for God's service.

We believe and proclaim the gospel, that in Jesus Christ God loves and redeems the world. We share a common understanding of God's justifying grace, i.e. that we are accounted righteous and are made righteous before God only by grace through faith because of the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and not on account of our works or merit. Both our traditions affirm that justification leads and must lead to "good works"; authentic faith issues in love.

Anglicans and Lutherans believe that the church is not the creation of individual believers, but that it is constituted and sustained by the Triune God through God's saving action in Word and Sacraments. We believe that the church is sent into the world as sign, instrument, and foretaste of the kingdom of God. But we also recognize that the church stands in constant need of reform and renewal.

We believe that all members of the church are called to participate in its apostolic mission. They are therefore given various ministries by the Holy Spirit. Within the community of the church the ordained ministry exists to serve the ministry of the whole people of God. We hold the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament to be a gift of God to his church and therefore an office of divine institution.

We believe that a ministry of pastoral oversight (*episkope*), exercised in personal, collegial, and communal ways, is necessary to witness to and safeguard the unity and apostolicity of the church.

We share a common hope in the final consummation of the kingdom of God and believe that we are compelled to work for the establishment of justice and peace. The obligations of the kingdom are to govern our life in the church and our concern for the world.

The Christian faith is that God has made peace through Jesus “by the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:20) so establishing the one valid center for the unity of the whole human family.<sup>5</sup>

### *Joint Participation in the Ordination/Installation of Bishops with Prayer and the Laying-on-of-Hands<sup>6</sup>*

3. We acknowledge that one another’s ordained ministries are given by God to be instruments of God’s grace, and possess not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ’s commission through his body, the church. We agree that the threefold ministry of bishops, presbyters, and deacons in historic succession will be the future pattern of the one ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament shared corporately within the two churches as they begin to live in full communion.<sup>7</sup>

In the course of history many and various terms have been used to describe the rite by which a person becomes a bishop. In the English language these terms include: ordaining, consecrating, ordering, making, confecting, constituting, installing. What is involved is a setting apart with prayer and the laying-on-of-hands by other bishops of a person for life service of the gospel in the distinct ministry of bishop within the one ministry of Word and Sacrament. As a result of their agreement in faith, both churches hereby pledge themselves, beginning at the time that this agreement is accepted by the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to the common joint ordinations/installations of all future bishops as apostolic missionaries in the historic episcopate for the sake of common mission.<sup>8</sup>

Each church hereby promises to invite and include on an invariable basis at least three bishops of the other church, as well as three of its own, to participate in the laying-on-of-hands at the ordinations/installations of its own bishops as a sign of the unity and apostolic continuity of the whole church.<sup>9</sup> Such participation is the liturgical form by which the church recognizes that the bishop serves the local or regional church through ties of collegiality and consultation, the purpose of which is to provide links with the universal church.<sup>10</sup> Inasmuch as both churches agree that a ministry of *episkope* is necessary to witness to, promote, and safeguard the unity and apostolicity of the church and its continuity in doctrine and mission across time and space,<sup>11</sup> this participation is understood as a call in each place for mutual planning, consultation, and interaction in *episkope*, mission, teaching, and pastoral care as well as a liturgical expression of the full communion that is being initiated by this *Concordat of Agreement*. Each church understands that the bishops in this action are representatives of their own churches in fidelity to the teaching and mission of the apostles. Their participation in this way embodies the historical continuity of each bishop and the diocese or synod with the apostolic church and ministry through the ages.<sup>12</sup>

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### B. Actions of The Episcopal Church

4. The Episcopal Church hereby recognizes now the full authenticity of the ordained ministries presently existing within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Episcopal Church acknowledges the pastors and bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as priests within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as chief pastors exercising a ministry of *episkope* over the jurisdictional areas of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which they preside.<sup>13</sup>
5. To enable the full communion that is coming into being by means of this *Concordat of Agreement*, The Episcopal Church hereby pledges, at the same time that this *Concordat of Agreement* is accepted by its General Convention and by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to begin the process for enacting a temporary suspension, in this case only, of the seventeenth century restriction that “no persons are allowed to exercise the offices of bishop, priest, or deacon in this Church unless they are so ordained, or have already received such ordination with the laying-on- of-hands by bishops who are themselves duly qualified to confer Holy Orders.”<sup>14</sup> The purpose of this action, to declare this restriction inapplicable to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, will be to permit the full interchangeability and reciprocity of all its pastors as priests or presbyters, and all its deacons as may be determined, without any further ordination or re-ordination or supplemental ordination whatsoever, subject always to canonically or constitutionally approved invitation (see Pars. 14, 15 and 16 below). The purpose of temporarily suspending this restriction, which has been a constant requirement in Anglican polity since the Ordinal of 1662,<sup>15</sup> is precisely in order to secure the future implementation of the ordinals' same principle within the eventually fully integrated ministries. It is for this reason that The Episcopal Church can feel confident in taking this unprecedented step with regard to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
6. The Episcopal Church hereby endorses the Lutheran affirmation that the historic catholic episcopate under the Word of God must always serve the gospel,<sup>16</sup> and that the ultimate authority under which bishops preach and teach is the gospel itself.<sup>17</sup> In testimony and implementation thereof, The Episcopal Church agrees to establish and welcome, either by itself or jointly with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, structures for collegial and periodic review of its episcopal ministry, as well as that of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with a view to evaluation, adaptation, improvement, and continual reform in the service of the gospel.<sup>18</sup>

### C. Actions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

7. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America agrees that all its bishops will be understood as ordained, like other pastors, for life service of the gospel in the pastoral ministry of the historic episcopate,<sup>19</sup> even though tenure in office of the Presiding Bishop<sup>20</sup> and synodical bishops may be terminated by retirement, resignation, or conclusion of term however constitutionally ordered. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America further agrees to revise its rite for the “Installation of a Bishop”<sup>21</sup> to reflect this understanding. In keeping with these principles the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also agrees to revise its constitution so that all bishops, including those no longer active, may attend the meetings of the Conference of Bishops.

8. As regards ordained ministry, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirms, in the context of its confessional heritage, the teaching of the Augsburg Confession that Lutherans do not intend to depart from the historic faith and practice of catholic Christianity.<sup>22</sup> The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America agrees to revise its rite for the "Installation of a Bishop" to incorporate the participation of Lutheran and Episcopal bishops in prayer and the laying-on-of-hands. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also agrees to make constitutional and liturgical provision that only bishops shall ordain all clergy. Pastors/Priests shall continue to participate in the laying-on-of-hands at all ordinations of pastors/priests. It is further understood that episcopal and pastoral/priestly office in the church is to be understood and exercised as servant ministry, and not for domination or arbitrary control.<sup>23</sup> Appropriate liturgical expression of these understandings will be made.<sup>24</sup> Both churches acknowledge that the diaconate, including its place within the threefold ministerial office and its relationship with other ministries, is in need of continued study and reform, which they pledge themselves to undertake in consultation with one another.<sup>25</sup>
9. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America hereby recognizes now the full authenticity of the ordained ministries presently existing within The Episcopal Church, acknowledging the bishops, priests, and deacons of The Episcopal Church all as pastors in their respective orders within The Episcopal Church and the bishops of The Episcopal Church as chief pastors in the historic succession exercising a ministry of *episkope* over the jurisdictional areas of The Episcopal Church in which they preside. In preparation for the full communion that is coming into being by means of this *Concordat of Agreement*, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also pledges, at the time that this *Concordat of Agreement* is accepted by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the General Convention of The Episcopal Church, to begin the process for enacting a dispensation for ordained ministers of The Episcopal Church from its ordination requirement of acceptance of the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the other confessional writings in the *Book of Concord (Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2.05., 2.06., 2.07., and 7.22.)* in order to permit the full interchangeability and reciprocity of all Episcopal Church bishops as bishops, of all Episcopal Church priests as pastors, and of all Episcopal Church deacons as may be determined (see Par. 8 above), within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America without any supplemental vow or declaration, subject always to canonically or constitutionally approved invitation (see Pars. 14, 15 and 16 below). The purpose of this dispensation, which heretofore has not been made by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the clergy of any other church, is precisely in order to serve the future implementation, in the full communion that will follow, of the agreement in the doctrine of the faith identified in Paragraph 2 (above) of this *Concordat of Agreement*.<sup>26</sup>

#### **D. Actions of Both Churches**

##### *Joint Commission*

10. To assist in joint planning for mission, both churches hereby authorize the establishment of a joint ecumenical/doctrinal/liturgical commission, accountable to the two churches in a manner to be determined by each church. Its purpose will also be to moderate the details of these changes, to facilitate consultation and common decision making through appropriate channels in fundamental matters that the churches may face together in the future, to enable the process of new ordinations/installations of bishops in both churches as they occur, and to issue guidelines as requested and as may seem appropriate. It will prepare a national service that will celebrate the

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inauguration of this *Concordat of Agreement* as a common obedience to Christ in mission. At this service the mutual recognition of faith will be celebrated and, if possible, new bishops from each church will be ordained/installed for the dioceses or synods that have elected them, initiating the provisions hereby agreed upon.

### *Wider Context*

11. In thus moving to establish, in geographically overlapping episcopates in collegial consultation, one ordained ministry open to women as well as to men, to married persons as well as to single persons, both churches agree that the historic catholic episcopate, which they have embraced, either by historical practice or confessional writings, can be locally adapted and reformed in the service of the gospel. In this spirit they offer this *Concordat of Agreement* and growth toward full communion for serious consideration among the churches of the Reformation as well as among the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. They pledge widespread consultation during the process at all stages. Each church promises to issue no official commentary on this text that has not been approved by the Joint Commission as a legitimate interpretation thereof.

### *Existing Relationships*

12. Each church agrees that the other church will continue to live in communion with all the churches with whom the latter is now in communion. Each church also pledges continuing consultation about this *Concordat of Agreement* with those churches. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continues to be in full communion (pulpit and altar fellowship) with all member churches of the Lutheran World Federation. This *Concordat of Agreement* with The Episcopal Church does not imply or inaugurate any automatic communion between The Episcopal Church and the other member churches of the Lutheran World Federation. The Episcopal Church continues to be in full communion with all of the Provinces of the Anglican Communion, and with Old Catholic Churches of Europe, with the united churches of the Indian sub-continent, with the Mar Thoma Church, and with the Philippine Independent Church. This *Concordat of Agreement* with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America does not imply or inaugurate any automatic communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the other Provinces of the Anglican Communion or any other churches with whom The Episcopal Church is in full communion.

### *Other Dialogues*

13. Both churches agree that each will continue to engage in dialogue with other churches and traditions. Both churches agree to take each other and this *Concordat of Agreement* into account at every stage in their dialogues with other churches and traditions. Where appropriate, both churches will seek to engage in joint dialogues. On the basis of this *Concordat of Agreement*, both churches pledge that they will not enter into formal agreements with other churches and traditions without prior consultation with each other. At the same time both churches pledge that they will not impede the development of relationships and agreements with other churches and traditions with whom they have been in dialogue.

## **E. Full Communion**

14. Of all the historical processes involved in realizing full communion between The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the achieving of full interchangeability of ordained episcopal ministries will probably take longest. While the two churches will fully acknowledge the

authenticity of each other's ordained ministries from the beginning of the process, the creation of a common, and therefore fully interchangeable, episcopal ministry will occur with the full incorporation of all active bishops in the historic episcopate by common joint ordinations/installations and the continuing process of collegial consultation in matters of Christian faith and life. Full communion will also include the activities of the Joint Commission (Par. 10 above), as well as the establishment locally and nationally of "recognized organs of regular consultation and communication, including episcopal collegiality, to express and strengthen the fellowship and enable common witness, life and service."<sup>27</sup> Thereby the churches are permanently committed to common mission and ministry on the basis of agreement in faith, recognizing each other fully as churches in which the gospel is preached and the holy sacraments administered. All provisions specified above will continue in effect.

15. On the basis of this *Concordat of Agreement*, at a given date recommended by the Joint Commission, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Church will announce the completion of the process by which they enjoy full communion with each other. They will share one ordained ministry in two churches that are in full communion, still autonomous in structure yet interdependent in doctrine, mission and ministry.
16. Consequent to the acknowledgment of full communion and respecting always the internal discipline of each church, both churches now accept in principle the full interchangeability and reciprocity of their ordained ministries, recognizing bishops as bishops, pastors as priests and presbyters and *vice versa*, and deacons as may be determined. In consequence of our mutual pledge to a future already anticipated in Christ and the church of the early centuries,<sup>28</sup> each church will make such necessary revisions of canons and constitutions so that all ordained clergy in good standing can, upon canonically or constitutionally approved invitation, function as clergy in corresponding situations within either church. The churches will authorize such celebrations of the Eucharist as will accord full recognition to each other's episcopal ministries and sacramental services. All further necessary legislative, canonical, constitutional, and liturgical changes will be coordinated by the joint ecumenical/doctrinal/liturgical commission hereby established.

## CONCLUSION

We receive with thanksgiving the gift of unity which is already given in Christ.

He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers, all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross (Col. 1:15-20).

Repeatedly Christians have confessed that the unity of the church is given, not achieved. The church can only be one because it is constituted by the gospel in Word and Sacrament, and there is but one gospel. What Christians are seeking when they engage in the tasks and efforts associated with ecumenism is to

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discover how the unity they have already been given by the gospel can be manifested faithfully in terms of the church's mission.<sup>29</sup>

We do not know to what new, recovered, or continuing tasks of mission this *Concordat of Agreement* will lead our churches, but we give thanks to God for leading us to this point. We entrust ourselves to that leading in the future, confident that our full communion will be a witness to the gift and goal already present in Christ, "so that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). It is the gift of Christ that we are sent as he has been sent (John 17:17-26), that our unity will be received and perceived as we participate together in the mission of the Son in obedience to the Father through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.<sup>30</sup>

*Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all that we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen (Eph. 3:20-21).*

### ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Cf., the complete text of the 1982 Agreement in paragraph 1 of the report, "*Toward Full Communion*" and "*Concordat of Agreement*" (Minneapolis: Augsburg, and Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> *Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Report of the Anglican-Lutheran Joint Working Group, Cold Ash, Berkshire, England--1983*, in William A. Norgren, editor, *What Can We Share?* (Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1985), pp. 90-92. The relevant portion of the report reads as follows:

By full communion we here understand a relationship between two distinct churches or communions. Each maintains its own autonomy and recognizes the catholicity and apostolicity of the other, and each believes the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith:

- a) subject to such safeguards as ecclesial discipline may properly require, members of one body may receive the sacraments of the other;
- b) subject to local invitation, bishops of one church may take part in the consecration of the bishops of the other, thus acknowledging the duty of mutual care and concern;
- c) subject to church regulation, a bishop, pastor/priest or deacon of one ecclesial body may exercise liturgical functions in a congregation of the other body if invited to do so and also, when requested, pastoral care of the other's members;
- d) it is also a necessary addition and complement that there should be recognized organs of regular consultation and communication, including episcopal collegiality, to express and strengthen the fellowship and enable common witness, life and service.

To be in full communion means that churches become interdependent while remaining autonomous. One is not elevated to be the judge of the other nor can it remain insensitive to the other; neither is each body committed to every secondary feature of the tradition of the other. Thus the corporate strength of the churches is enhanced in love, and an isolated independence is restrained. Full communion . . . should not imply the suppressing of

ethnic, cultural or ecclesial characteristics of traditions which may in fact be maintained and developed by diverse institutions within one communion.

- <sup>3</sup> “A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment: A Policy Statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” in “Ecumenism: The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” adopted by the 1991 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and the “Declaration on Unity” adopted by the 1979 General Convention of The Episcopal Church.
- <sup>4</sup> Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue III held fourteen meetings between 1983 and 1991 at which some 43 papers were presented and discussed. A full list is found in “*Toward Full Communion*” and “*Concordat of Agreement*,” pp. 107-109. Many papers appear in Daniel F. Martensen, *Concordat of Agreement: Supporting Essays* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, and Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1995). Also see James E. Griffiss, and Daniel F. Martensen, editors, *A Commentary on “Concordat of Agreement”* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, and Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1994).
- <sup>5</sup> “*Toward Full Communion*” and “*Concordat of Agreement*,” pp. 26-27. Cf. The Niagara Report (London: Church House Publishing, 1988), Pars. 61-70; The Meissen Common Statement. On the Way to Visible Unity. Meissen, 18 March 1988 (in *The Meissen Agreement: Texts - CCU Occasional Paper No. 2, 1992*), pp. 16-19; and *The Porvoo Common Statement - 1993* -- CCU Occasional Paper No. 3, 1993), p. 18-21.
- <sup>6</sup> This Concordat employs the term “installation of bishops” from the usage of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as having the same meaning as the term “ordination of bishops” from the usage of The Episcopal Church. In both cases the ministry of bishop is conferred in a liturgical rite that includes the setting apart with prayer and the laying-on-of-hands by other bishops.
- <sup>7</sup> Cf. Apology, Article 14, 1, which reads: “On this matter we have given frequent testimony in the assembly to our deep desire to maintain the church polity and various ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, although they were created by human authority. We know that the Fathers had good and useful reasons for instituting ecclesiastical discipline in the manner described by the ancient canons.” Also cf. Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral 4, and “*Toward Full Communion*” and “*Concordat of Agreement*,” Par. 81, p. 78. While the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recognizes the ministries of ordained deacons in The Episcopal Church, the Concordat does not require the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to ordain its diaconal ministers.
- <sup>8</sup> Cf. Richard Grein, “The Bishop as Chief Missionary,” in Charles R. Henery, editor, *Beyond the Horizon: Frontiers for Mission* (Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1986), pp. 64-80.
- <sup>9</sup> *The Niagara Report* (London: Church House Publishing, 1988), Pars. 91 and 96; The Council of Nicaea, Canon 4. The Concordat’s intention here is to express liturgically the full communion between the neighboring churches and their mutual recognition as catholic and apostolic. Its Constitution and Book of Common Prayer require The Episcopal Church to have three bishops participate in the laying-on-of-hands. Simple parity and the recognition of the authenticity of the presently ordained ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America means that it too will agree to have three of its bishops participate in the laying-on-of-hands, in conformity with its own confessional commitment

to the historic polity of the Church, Apology, Article 14, 1-5 and Treatise on the Power and the Primacy of the Pope, Par. 13.

- <sup>10</sup> Michael Root, "Full Communion Between Episcopalians and Lutherans in North America: What Would It Look Like?" in *Concordat of Agreement: Supporting Essays*, pp. 165-190. Cf. Michael Root, "Bishops as Points of Unity and Continuity," in *Episcopacy: Lutheran-United Methodist Dialogue II*, edited by Jack M. Tuell and Roger W. Fjeld (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1991), pp. 118-125.
- <sup>11</sup> The description of *episkope* as "necessary" is taken from The Lutheran-United Methodist Common Statement on Episcopacy, Par. 28, and from *The Niagara Report*, Par. 69, cited earlier in this Concordat in Par. 2. Cf. Titus 1:7-9, 1 Tim. 3:1, 4:14-16, John 21:15-17, 2 Cor. 11:28, and Phil. 1:1. Cf. also "*Toward Full Communion*" and "*Concordat of Agreement*," Par. 25, pp. 32-33.
- <sup>12</sup> Cf. Resolutions of the 1979 and 1985 General Conventions of The Episcopal Church; The Canterbury Statement, Par. 16, of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission; and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's statement, "Ecumenism: The Vision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," 1991.
- <sup>13</sup> *The Niagara Report*, Par. 94. Cf. Raymond E. Brown, *Priest and Bishop: Biblical Reflections* (New York: Paulist Press, 1970), pp. 83-85. Cf. "*Toward Full Communion*" and "*Concordat of Agreement*," Par. 78, pp. 76-77: "Both churches agree to recognize the full authenticity of existing ministries. Nothing will be done which calls into question the authenticity of present ordinations and ministries and sacraments. Lutherans also need to understand that the future joint consecrations do not mean that Lutheran bishops will have greater authority, for the gospel of God's promise confers all the authority which the church and its ministers have or need. Nor will future Lutheran bishops have powers which they do not now have. They will continue to exercise *episkope* on the basis of the framework of constitutional accountability which currently obtains in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Canon law in The Episcopal Church and synodical constitutions in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will continue to set terms of office and procedures for the election of bishops."
- <sup>14</sup> "Preface to the Ordination Rites," The Book of Common Prayer, p. 510.
- <sup>15</sup> Cf. *The Study of Anglicanism*, edited by Stephen Sykes and John Booty (London: SPCK, and Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), pp. 149, 151, 238, 290, 304-305; Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Anglican Ordinal* (London: SPCK, 1971), Chapter 6.
- <sup>16</sup> *The Niagara Report*, Par. 91; Augsburg Confession Article 7, Article 28.
- <sup>17</sup> Cf. Joseph A. Burgess, "An Evangelical Episcopate," in Todd Nichol and Marc Kolden, editors, *Called and Ordained* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1990), p. 147.
- <sup>18</sup> Cf. *The Niagara Report*, Pars. 90, 95, and especially 100-110 as examples of the questions and concerns involved in such evaluation. Cf. also *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Ministry Par. 38.
- <sup>19</sup> Cf. *The Niagara Report*, Par. 90.
- <sup>20</sup> The term "Presiding Bishop" here in reference to the churchwide bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is contingent upon approval by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly.
- <sup>21</sup> *Occasional Services* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1982), pp. 218-223.

- <sup>22</sup> Augsburg Confession, Article 21, 1; cf. Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, Par. 66.
- <sup>23</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. 10:8; also *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Dublin Agreed Statement 1984* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), pp. 13-14; and Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, *The Final Report* (London: SPCK and Catholic Truth Society, 1982), pp. 83 and 89.
- <sup>24</sup> Cf. *The Niagara Report*, Par. 92.
- <sup>25</sup> *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Ministry Par. 24; and *The Diaconate as Ecumenical Opportunity*, report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Commission, 1996. Cf. James M. Barnett, *The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1981), pp. 133-197; John E. Booty, *The Servant Church: Diaconal Ministry and the Episcopal Church* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1982); and J. Robert Wright, "The Emergence of the Diaconate: Biblical and Patristic Sources," *Liturgy*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Fall, 1982), pp. 17-23, 67-71. Cf. also "Together for Ministry: Final Report and Recommendations," Task Force on the Study of Ministry, 1988-1993, and subsequent actions of the 1993 and 1995 ELCA Churchwide Assemblies.
- <sup>26</sup> A member of the clergy serving temporarily in the ministry of the other church would be expected to undergo the acceptance procedures of that church, "respecting always the internal discipline of each church" (Par. 16). A member of the clergy seeking long-term ministry with primary responsibility in the other church would be expected to apply for clergy transfer and would agree to the ordination vow or declaration in the church to which she or he would be applying to minister permanently.
- <sup>27</sup> The Cold Ash report, paragraph d. See footnote 2, above.
- <sup>28</sup> Cf. John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), pp. 171-208.
- <sup>29</sup> *Implications of the Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, and Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1988), edited by William A. Norgren and William G. Rusch, with a Study Guide by Darlis J. Swan and Elizabeth Z. Turner, Par. 98, p.74.
- <sup>30</sup> *The Niagara Report*, Pars. 25-26.

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### *OFFICIAL DIALOGUES continued*

#### **North American Anglican - Old Catholic Working Group Of The International Anglican - Old Catholic Theological Conference**

The Polish National Catholic Church in the United States and in Poland is part of the Union of Utrecht and considers itself among the Old Catholic Churches. In 1979, in response to the ordination of women in the Episcopal Church, the PNCC declared that it was no longer in communion with the Episcopal Church. In 1990 and 1993 and in each year since, there have been dialogues between our two churches, conducted by the North American Anglican - Old Catholic Working Group of the International Anglican - Old Catholic Theological Conference. These conversations have clarified that our two churches share doctrinal and sacramental congruence in all areas other than the ordination of women.

The question of the ordination of women is under considerable discussion among Old Catholics. Women have been ordained to the priesthood in Germany, and the matter is scheduled for major discussion by Old Catholics in July 1997. Included in future discussion in the North American Old Catholic Working Group of the International Anglican - Old Catholic Theological Conference will be the following topics: Old Catholic decisions relative to the ordination of women, study of our respective liturgical traditions, and discussions regarding the mutual relationship of the Philippine Independent Church, the Polish National Catholic Church, and the Episcopal Church in the United States.

#### **Episcopal - Reformed Episcopal**

In the past triennium the Reformed Episcopal Church, which became a separate denomination in the 1870's, and the Episcopal Church took the first steps toward establishing a theological dialogue. In 1996 the Episcopal Church's Ecumenical Officer, the Rev. Canon David Perry, and Bishop Gregory Hotchkiss of the Reformed Episcopal Church met with a small group to explore means of realizing the dialogue. A March 1997 meeting further developed the structure for the projected Reformed Episcopal - Episcopal Church Dialogue which will begin to meet in the 1997-2000 triennium.

#### *SCER Goals for the Triennium*

1. Establish a new committee for dialogue, including at least one SCER member.
2. Establishing a basis for mutual recognition of our ordained ministries (as per a 1994 General Convention resolution A031).
3. Exploring areas of mutual ministry.

#### **Episcopal - Moravian Proposed**

A group of four Episcopalians and four Moravians met in November 1996 in Winston-Salem, NC, at the request of the Rt. Rev. Robert H. Johnson, the Episcopal Bishop of Western North Carolina, and the Rt. Rev. Graham H. Rights, a Bishop of the Moravian Church, to discuss the possibility of an Episcopal-Moravian Dialogue. The American provinces of the Moravian Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have just concluded a dialogue that has led to a proposal entitled "Following our Shepherd to Full Communion," which recommends full communion between those two bodies. Anglicans have long-standing cordial relationships with the Moravian Church in those places where the Moravians have been present and active. But the Episcopal Church has not engaged in formal dialogue with them, and we are not in communion with them.

The Moravian Church, officially the *Unitas Fratrum*, is an international ecclesial body of some 720,000 souls in twenty-four provinces throughout the world. They have a long and complicated history, which began with the pre-Reformation movement in the Roman Catholic Church led by John Hus, Master of the University of Prague. Hus was burned at the stake by the Council of Constance in 1415, but the Catholic reforms he proposed were eventually accepted: the translation of the liturgy and the scriptures into the vernacular and the restoration of the common cup to the laity. The Hussite movement grew strong in Bohemia and Moravia, and the Reformation was firmly established in those lands until the Thirty Years War 1618-1648. With the conclusion of that war the Roman Catholic Church was reestablished with a pogrom that decimated the Czech population and sent countless thousands of Bohemian and Moravian Hussites into exile. Most of these exiles ended up in the German states of Saxony and Silesia. In the eighteenth century they experienced a remarkable renewal and were influenced by German Pietism. They claim loyalty to the canonical Scriptures, the Nicene and Apostles' creeds, the apostolic episcopacy, and the dominical sacraments, which they consider to be means of grace, not mere signs.

We propose the establishment of an official dialogue with the Moravian Church.

**Resolution A021 Dialogue with Moravian Church**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations,
- 2 in consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Department for Ecumenical Affairs,
- 3 establish a dialogue with the Moravian Church in America in order to reaffirm those things we hold in
- 4 common, to explore the possibilities of full communion, mutual recognition of ministries, and shared
- 5 mission and evangelism.

*Explanation*

The roots of the Moravian Church, *Unitas Fratrum*, are deep in pre-Reformation Bohemia and Moravia; Anglicans have been in relationship with them since the sixteenth century. Two of their most famous bishops visited England and enjoyed the support of the Church of England, Comenius in the seventeenth century and Zinzendorf in the eighteenth century. They were recognized by Parliament as "an ancient Protestant Episcopal Church with doctrines not essentially different from those of the Church of England." In Colonial America their churches functioned as parishes of the Church of England. But we have had almost no contact with them since the American Revolution and the organization of our churches as separate denominations. They are a small and broadly scattered worldwide body. A recovery of our relationship in the form of a dialogue at this time may be invigorating and useful to them and to us.

**E. PARTICIPATION IN COUNCILS OF CHURCHES**

**National Council Of The Churches Of Christ In The U.S.A.**

In November 1997, the Rt. Rev. Craig B. Anderson will take office as President of the NCCC. Episcopalians serve in a number of capacities on the NCCC staff and represent the church on committees and commissions throughout the NCCC structure. This participation is in support of the Episcopal Church's historic commitment to the unity of the church, which is foundational to NCCC and its ecumenical agenda.

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The “transformation” process begun under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Joan Brown-Campbell, General Secretary of the NCCC, is still in an active phase. A number of new executive staff appointments have been made which have the potential for bringing significant new leadership to NCCC management.

A major accomplishment of the NCCC in 1996 has been the establishment of the Burned Churches Fund, in response to an epidemic of church burnings primarily of African-American churches. In addition to re-building the churches, the tremendous national response enabled NCCC, with permission of major donors, to use some of the funds to get at the root cause of the burnings by mounting a major anti-racism effort.

The Church World Service arm of NCCC has done major work in 1995, 1996, and in early 1997, in responding to the natural disasters which struck in various parts of the U.S., and also in responding to the needs of refugees in Somalia, Bosnia, Iraq, and in other areas experiencing social and political upheaval.

SCER urges the full support of the church for Bishop Craig Anderson as he assumes his new responsibility as NCCC President. We look forward to his leadership as the “transformation” process continues.

### *SCER Goals for the Triennium*

1. To have in place a well-defined procedure for on-going two way communication between SCER and Episcopal members of the Governing Board and of NCCC commissions and committees.
2. To play a more active role in fulfilling the “nominating for appointment” responsibilities assigned to the SCER in Canon 1.1.2 (n) (3).

### **World Council Of Churches**

During this triennium, at the request of the WCC, the Episcopal Church, through the SCER, transmitted its vision for the future of the World Council of Churches in a written document responding to a series of questions. This report, together with that of other member churches, contributed toward the November 1996 document issued by the WCC “Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches.” This document, designed as a “Working Draft for a Policy Statement,” has been submitted to member churches by the WCC for response. This is the immediate task before the SCER.

The Episcopal Church will have delegates at the 1998 WCC Assembly in Harare who will be prepared to represent the Episcopal Church and to share their experience upon returning.

The 50th Anniversary of the founding of the WCC will be celebrated in 1997. The number of member churches has more than doubled since the first Amsterdam Assembly.

The ecumenical movement has taken root in the life of our churches and a common tradition of faith, life, and witness has begun to emerge as the churches have acted together worldwide through the WCC.

The WCC is in a transition period facing a severe reduction in funds as have many of the member churches. The 50th Anniversary is a celebration, but also the occasion for establishing guidelines for reworking the WCC structures and relationships.

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, is a member of the Central Committee. The Rev. Canon David W. Perry, Ecumenical Officer of the Episcopal Church, is a member of the Unit II Commission. The Rev. Robert Massie is a member of Unit IV Commission.

#### *Conference On World Mission And Evangelism*

The Episcopal Church sent two delegates to the WCC Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, from November 24 through December 3, 1996. They were Margaret S. Larom, the World Mission Interpretation and Networks Officer at the Episcopal Church Center, and Keith A. Yamamoto of the Diocese of Los Angeles, a young student at The General Theological Seminary who spent his middler year at the ecumenical seminary in Matanzas, Cuba. Nearly 640 participants represented Protestant and Orthodox churches from around the globe. In addition, 11 Roman Catholic delegates and a number of evangelicals from non-member churches attended.

The theme of the conference, "Called to One Hope--the Gospel in Diverse Cultures," was addressed in plenary sessions and in four sections focusing on "1) authentic witness within each culture, 2) gospel and identity in community, 3) local congregation in pluralist societies, and 4) one gospel-diverse expressions." The conference was the culmination of a world-wide study process that led to the publication of 15 WCC "Gospel and Culture" pamphlets as well as other significant resources. A series of seven bible studies on the Acts of the Apostles, specially prepared for the conference, was published in a fine booklet called "Spirit, Gospel, Cultures."

Awareness of the WCC's financial fragility and impending restructuring raised concern about the future of the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism. (The CWME is mandated to take place every eight years or so, between WCC Assemblies; the last was in San Antonio, Texas, in 1989.) This concern led to the approval of detailed proposals for the WCC Central Committee, regarding the future of the CWME, and the tasks of mission and evangelism within the WCC staffing and structure.

#### *SCER Goals for the Triennium*

1. To formulate concrete plans with a timeline for developing an interface between the SCER and the Episcopal delegates to the 1998 Assembly in Harare, concerning preparation beforehand and a report back afterwards.
2. To examine, analyze, and write a response to the document "Towards a Common Understanding of the World Council of Churches."

#### F. REPORTS RECEIVED BY THE STANDING COMMISSION

##### **Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers**

Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) is a network of episcopally appointed persons, ordained and lay, the mission of which is to provide support and training for diocesan ecumenical officers, encourage ecumenical activity within parishes and dioceses, enhance communication throughout the Episcopal Church about ecumenism, and encourage liaison among all those whose ministries have, or should have, an ecumenical dimension. EDEO was established in 1974 at the initiation of diocesan officers and with the direction of the Ecumenical Office of the Episcopal Church. Working with the bishop and frequently with a diocesan commission, each ecumenical officer serves as a means of communication, education and resourcing between the SCER, the

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Ecumenical Office, and the local church. EDEO renews the request of the 1991 General Convention that in each diocese, an ecumenical officer and associate officers be appointed.

EDEO meets annually in the spring within the context of the National Workshop on Christian Unity. Besides attending to specific EDEO business, participants meet jointly with the Roman Catholic counterpart network, the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (NADEO); the Lutheran counterpart, the Lutheran Ecumenical Representatives Network (LERN); and the network of other Protestant denominations, Ecumenical Colleagues (ECCO). The executive committees and officers of the networks meet together regularly, and the Executive Director of the Consultation on Church Union also meets with the EDEO Executive Committee. Representatives from EDEO help provide leadership for the National Workshop.

During this triennium, EDEO has focused on the proposal for full communion between the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. An important thrust has been the distribution of documents and resources, there being no other vehicle in the absence of the *Ecumenical Bulletin*. Three times a year EDEO publishes a newsletter that is sent to officers and associates, SCER members, the Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee, Episcopalians on ecumenical agency staffs, and other friends. EDEO held an introductory Ecumenical Institute in May 1996, at The General Theological Seminary and offered each Episcopal seminary one student scholarship to the Institute.

### **Episcopal - Russian Orthodox Joint Coordinating Committee**

The Joint Coordinating Committee appointed by His Holiness Alexy II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and by the Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church, has continued to develop warm and multi-faceted relationships during this triennium.

In preparing practical proposals for cooperation between the two churches, the Joint Coordinating Committee has worked to develop some Russian Orthodox - Episcopal diocesan links and many parish to parish relationships. Much of the coordination and continued development of practical proposals has been facilitated through "The Russian Ministry Network." There has continued to be exchanges between seminarians and seminary faculty involved in the development of relationships, as well as exchange visits of the Presiding Bishop's staff members. On an even more practical level has been the collection of computer hardware, books, and other goods to be shipped for use in parishes and institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Assistance has also been offered to work with the education department of the Patriarchate to develop ways to provide suitable Christian education in public schools, as requested by the Russian government. Work has continued in the St. Petersburg area to enable the diocese to become trained and involved in weekly religious broadcasting.

At the request of His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II, the Suffragan Bishop of the Armed Forces, the Rt. Rev. Charles Keyser, has worked earnestly with Bishop Savva, appointed Bishop to the Armed Forces of Russia, to develop a close relationship and provide much needed expertise in the area of chaplaincy to the armed forces. This strong relationship was manifested in a joint visit of the two bishops to chaplains and troops stationed in Bosnia.

The Diocese of New York has been very active in its relationship with the Russian Orthodox Church through the dioceses of the Moscow region. This continued enhancement of relationships has been led by the Rt. Rev. Richard Grein, Bishop of New York.

In 1994, a most fruitful dialogue on "Evangelism and Christian Formation" was held in Delray Beach, Florida, to assist the Russian Orthodox Church in understanding, from an American point of view, the many Christian groups that have become evangelists in Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church has had, and still has, grave concern over what they perceive to be the proselytization of its members.

A formal visit by the Presiding Bishop to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia is scheduled to take place in May, 1997. The Joint Coordinating Committee was proposed by our Presiding Bishop during an earlier visit to the Patriarchate in 1989. The growth of the relationship in recent years will be celebrated during the visit prior to our Primate's retirement. A theological dialogue on the subject of "Ecclesiology" is scheduled to coincide with this historic visit.

Thanks should be expressed to people and parishes of both churches who have reached out in friendship and Christian love, and to the many individuals and organizations whose varied contributions have brought into being a network to facilitate this cooperation. We also thank the organizations, dioceses, and parishes who pursue the implementation of understanding and caring between our two churches. Finally our gratitude to our ecumenical officers, the Rev. Dr. William A. Norgren and the Rev. Canon David Perry, and members of the Coordinating Committees: Valery Chukalov; Ms. Elena Speranskaya; the Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright; Ms. Suzanne Massie; and our co-chairs, Archbishop Clement; and the Rt. Rev. Roger J. White, Bishop of Milwaukee.

**PRESIDING BISHOP'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON  
INTERFAITH RELATIONS  
(1994-1997)**

**MEMBERSHIP**

The Rt. Rev. David B. Reed (Kentucky) *Chair*  
The Rt. Rev. R. Stewart Wood, Jr. (Michigan)  
The Rev. Malcolm David Eckel (Massachusetts)  
The Rev. Wadi Haddad (Connecticut)  
Ms. Colleen Mitchell (Southern Ohio)  
Mrs. Jane Wolf (Arkansas)  
Ms. Midge Roof, Liaison to Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO)

**SUMMARY OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK**

In specific relationship to its title, the principal activity of the committee was to bring together significant leaders of both Jewish and Muslim communities to meet together with the Presiding Bishop. It has also addressed some sensitive issues with and for the Presiding Bishop.

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The Interfaith Committee is committed to working closely with the Interfaith Commission of the National Council of Churches, providing experienced leaders, participating in dialogues, and coordinating activities through both the Christian-Jewish and the Christian-Muslim Committees.

As the only organization in the Episcopal Church with an Interfaith focus, this committee has been broadening its own knowledge of and contact with other religious traditions. This has included an orientation into Buddhism as a world religion, and participation by committee members in national gatherings that provided for encounters with primarily Jewish and Buddhist participants. The Islamic community is more difficult to meet at the national level. It has also looked into resource materials that might be available to help in interfaith contacts at the local, parish level. Looking to the future, the committee prepared the following projections for its life:

### **THE INTERFAITH AGENDA OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 1996 - 2001**

#### **Thesis**

By the year 2001 Interfaith relations will be far more important to the Episcopal Church than they appear to be today. In both the pluralistic society of the United States and on the international scene, the Interfaith dimension is rapidly growing with major Peace and Justice implications as well as the spiritual level of apparent religions in conflict. With due recognition of the significance of this changing scene, this church can take relatively simple steps during the next triennium to be better prepared for this development than it will be if the present approach continues unchanged.

#### **The Present Status of Interfaith Relations**

The Presiding Bishop appointed an Advisory Committee to assist him with Interfaith Relations at the beginning of the 1992-1994 triennium. There are currently seven members of that committee. It serves as the successor to a previous committee on Christian-Jewish relations which was disbanded when the Advisory Committee was formed. Two "Relational Committees" have been set up to deal with Episcopal-Jewish and Episcopal-Muslim relations, each of which includes some members of the Advisory Committee and additional persons with special experience with their respective faith communities. There is an implicit connection between the Interfaith Relations Committee and the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, which allowed for the inclusion of *Guidelines for Interfaith Relations* in a Blue Book report in 1994 as an appendix to the SCER report. Accomplishments of the Interfaith Committee so far have included two meetings per year, the preparation of "Principles for Interfaith Dialogue", two lunch meetings that introduced the Presiding Bishop to significant leadership in first the Jewish and then the Muslim communities, and occasional meetings of the Relational Committees. The committee believes that to be truly interfaith, it must extend beyond the two monotheistic religions having common roots in the Abrahamic covenant. In terms of new relationships, those with Buddhist and Hindu religious groups seem the most obvious.

#### **Interfaith Relations Contrasted With Ecumenical Dialogue**

The Presiding Bishop's Advisory Committee on Interfaith Relations understands that dialogue with members of other religions should be carried on at the national level through that body where Christians cooperate to work together - The National Council of the Churches of Christ in

the USA. The Episcopal Church is well represented in the Christian Jewish and Christian Muslim Committees for the NCCC, including the support for a seconded director for Muslim relations, the Rev. Bert Breiner, an Episcopal priest. The major work of our Interfaith Relations Committee is understood to be that of supporting the NCCC process and facilitating appropriate relations at the local level between the Episcopal Church and other faith communities.

### **Considerations for the Future**

If the committee is to expand its scope to include Buddhist and Hindu relationships, it will need to create the corresponding relational committees and will need additional members on the Interfaith Relations Committee to work with them.

Declining budgetary support for the national program of the Episcopal Church could mean that this work will suffer along with program units unless recognition is given to the growing importance of interfaith work.

A new Presiding Bishop will be coming into office at the beginning of the next triennium and a significant part of the role of this committee will be to help him in his relation with national leadership of other faith groups.

Some new means must be devised for communicating with local churches where there is an opportunity for interfaith work. Dependence on the network of Ecumenical Officers may be unrealistic, since they are already expected to do so much. The use of a Web page suggests real possibilities for relating the resources of this committee to local communities.

The Episcopal Church contains remarkable resources for national Interfaith dialogues, in both the academic and professional communities, who will only be available to the NCCC programs if this church is prepared to support their participation in conferences, dialogues and meetings.

### **Resolution A022 Dioceses to Promote Interfaith Dialogues**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That every diocese be encouraged to identify
- 2 existing faith groups within its boundaries and to open channels for dialogue, in accordance with
- 3 the Guidelines previously adopted by General Convention and in ecumenical partnerships
- 4 wherever possible, and be it further
- 5 *Resolved*, That Interfaith Liaisons with the Interfaith Committee be designated in each diocese, to
- 6 be drawn from interested persons with ECUNET or INTERNET communications capability.

### **Resolution A023 Seminaries to Prepare Graduates on Interfaith Issues**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the seminaries of this Church be encouraged to
- 2 prepare their graduates on what it means theologically to live in a permanently interfaith and
- 3 religiously pluralistic world.

## ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

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### G. BUDGET APPROPRIATION FOR STANDING COMMISSION ON ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

	1998	1999	2000
SCER Meetings/Plenary	\$32,000	\$32,000	\$16,000
Miscellaneous Preparations	2,000	2,000	2,000
Anglican			
- Oriental Orthodox	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
- Orthodox	3,000	3,000	3,000
- Roman Catholic	12,000	12,000	12,000
Consultation on Church Union			
- Executive Committee	\$3,200	\$3,200	\$3,200
- Unity/Justice	1,600	1,600	1,600
Consultation on Church Union Plenary		\$8,000	
Methodist Episcopal - Episcopal	\$3,200	\$3,200	\$3,200
Episcopal - Moravian	2,400	2,400	2,400
Polish National Catholic - Epis.	2,400	2,400	2,400
Episcopal - Reformed Episcopal	2,400	2,400	2,400
United Methodist - Episcopal	4,000	4,000	4,000
Miscellaneous meeting preparation:			
Joint Commission			
- ELCA-EC	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000
- Miscellaneous	2,000	2,000	2,000
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	\$88,700	\$96,700	\$72,700

#### Resolution A024 Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations Budget Appropriation

- 1 Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That there be appropriated from the Budget of
- 2 General Convention, the sum of \$258,100 for the Triennium for expenses of the Standing
- 3 Commission on Ecumenical Relations.

### H. RESPONSE OF SCER TO STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Our initiation and participation in ecumenical dialogues are responses to our canonical mandate to develop policy, not programmatic activities. Our experience in the Lutheran - Episcopal dialogue helps us to see that, when we function efficiently, our policy leads to resolutions that enable the goal of Christian unity and can be translated into programmatic activity. It is imperative for our accountability to the General Convention that SCER be represented on each ecumenical dialogue. SCER membership should continue to strike a balance among theological, academic, and practical expertise afforded by the present membership of six bishops, six priests or deacons, and six lay persons. This balance of orders has proven necessary to deal with the complexity of ecumenical issues. The current number of members enables the SCER to maintain connection with and

accountability for the numerous on-going dialogues, the myriad of dialogue possibilities with others, and our relationship with ecumenical agencies. In order to clarify SCER's responsibilities, we propose an amendment to Canon I.1.2(n)(3) as follows:

**Resolution A025 Amend Canon I.1.2 (n)(3): Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations**

1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That Canon I.1.2(n)(3) is hereby amended to read  
2 as follows (p.16):

3 (3) A Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations consisting of 18 members (6 Bishops, 6  
4 Priests or Deacons, 6 Lay Persons). Its duties shall be to develop, *through ecumenical dialogues*  
5 *and other means, and to recommend to the General Convention* a comprehensive and coordinated  
6 policy, *priorities*, and strategies on relations between this Church and other Churches: ~~to~~  
7 ~~furtherance of such policy to assign and delegate ecumenical endeavors and programs to~~  
8 ~~appropriate persons and bodies~~; to make recommendations to General Convention concerning  
9 inter-church cooperation and unity; and to carry out such instructions on ecumenical matters as  
10 may be given it from time to time by the General Convention. *This commission shall be informed*  
11 *as to all ecumenical matters undertaken by this church in order to develop a comprehensive and*  
12 *coordinated ecumenical policy*. It shall also nominate for appointment by the Presiding Bishop,  
13 with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, persons to *serve represent this Church in*  
14 *ecumenical matters and on the governing bodies of ecumenical organizations to which this Church*  
15 *belongs by action of the General Convention and to participate in major conferences as convened*  
16 ~~by such organizations.~~

I. GOALS FOR THE COMING TRIENNIUM

With the understanding that the SCER has responsibility for setting policy in ecumenism and administering the enabling of that policy, the SCER sets forth these policy goals which it has voted for the next triennium:

1. to develop a prayer cycle for our ecumenical dialogues;
2. to create an index of ecumenical partners and locations for purposes of advocacy and education;
3. to cooperate with the ELCA in formal dialogues with our joint ecumenical partners;
4. to produce ecumenical study guides in concert with the ELCA;
5. to resume, in 1998, conversations between the Episcopal Church and the historic black Methodist Episcopal Churches (AME, AMEZ and CME) with the goal of establishing formal and regular dialogue;
6. to continue to meet in dialogue with each of our ecumenical partners, to the end that we may be able to recognize doctrinal agreement and be ready in each case to move ever closer to the communion we seek;
7. to pursue the possibility of ecumenical dialogue with Christian communities from which we are estranged;
8. to establish ecumenical dialogues with such groups as the United Methodist Church and the Moravian Church;
9. to create sufficient churchwide awareness of our relationship with ecumenical partners to prepare the way for shared appreciation and activity in all areas of the Episcopal Church and other churches;

## ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

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10. to create, through EDEO and LERN, parish ecumenical groups for shared study, prayer, and mission, for regular joint activity;
11. to consult with the Anglican Consultative Council and other members of the Communion concerning all our ecumenical projects; and
12. to conduct a comprehensive review of all ecumenical dialogues of the Episcopal Church in light of our experience and learning from the Concordat of Agreement. Cf. Paragraph 13 of the Concordat: "Both churches agree to take each other and this Concordat of Agreement into account at every stage in their dialogues with other churches and traditions."

### APPENDIX

#### **Episcopal Church Representatives**

##### *The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches*

The Presiding Bishop

##### *The General Assembly of the National Council of Churches of Christ, 1995-1996*

The Most Edmond L. Browning

Dr. Pamela P. Chinnis

The Rt. Rev. Craig Anderson

The Rt. Rev. Henry Louttit

The Rev. Abigail Hamilton

The Rev. Canon John Kitagawa

The Rev. Canon David W. Perry

Dr. Alda Marsh Morgan

Ms. Cheryl Parris

Dr. Diane Porter

Ms. Gladys Rodrigues

Ms. Erma Jean Vizenor

##### *Anglican - Oriental Orthodox Consultation*

The Rt. Rev. Harry Shipps, *Chair*

##### *Anglican - Orthodox Consultation*

The Rt. Rev. Richard Grein, *Chair*

##### *Anglican - Roman Catholic Consultation*

The Rt. Rev. Frank Griswold, III *Co Chair*

The Rt. Rev. Frank J. Terry (1996)

The Rt. Rev. Edwin F. Gulick

The Rev. Paula D. Barker (1995)

The Rev. Canon Ashton Brooks

The Rev. Dr. Charles P. Price

The Rev. Dr. Ellen Wondra

Dr. Marsha Dutton

Dr. R. William Franklin

The Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright, theological consultant

*Consultation on Church Union Executive Committee*

The Rt. Rev. William G. Burrill

The Rev. Dr. Rena Karefa Smart

*Episcopal - Russian Orthodox Joint Coordinating Committee*

The Rt. Rev. Roger J. White

The Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright

Ms. Suzanne Massie

*Lutheran - Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee*

The Rt. Rev. Edward Jones

The Rev. Dr. Rena Karefa-Smart

The Rev. Dr. Alfred Moss

The Rev. Dr. O.C. Edwards, Jr.

Ms. Midge Roof

The Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright

The Rev. Dr. William A. Norgren, consultant to the Ecumenical Office

*North American Anglican - Old Catholic Working Group*

The Rt. Rev. David Joslin, *Chair*

The Rev. Robert Anthony

Dr. Betty Jo McGrade