

STANDING COMMISSION ON ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

I. MEMBERSHIP

Bishops

The Rt. Rev. William O. Gregg, <i>Chair</i>	Eastern Oregon VIII, 2006
The Rt. Rev. Edwin Gulick	Kentucky IV, 2009
The Rt. Rev. William D. Persell	Chicago V, 2006
The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe	Iowa VI, 2009
The Rt. Rev. Douglas E. Theuner	New Hampshire, I 2006
The Rt. Rev. Pierre Whalon	Churches in Europe II, 2009

Presbyters and Deacons

The Rev. Daniel S. Appleyard	Michigan V, 2009
The Very Rev. C.B. Baker	West Tennessee IV, 2009
The Very Rev. Joseph Britton	Connecticut I, 2006
The Very Rev. Donald D. Brown	Northern California VIII, 2006
The Rev. Deacon Lorraine Mills-Curran	Rhode Island I, 2009
The Rev. Ellen K. Wondra	Chicago V, 2006

Lay Persons

Dr. Roderick Dugliss	California VIII, 2009
Ms. Janet Farmer	Texas VII, 2009
Mr. James R. Foster	Eastern Oregon VIII, 2006
Ms. Elaine C. Francis	Virgin Islands IX, 2009
Ms. Alice Roberta Webley	Southern Virginia IV, 2006

Adjunct, Ex Officio and Staff

Mr. Arthur J. Geissler, <i>EDEIO Appointee/ Liaison</i>	Massachusetts I
The Rev. Randall Lee, <i>ELCA Liaison</i>	
The Rev. Timothy Vann, <i>Executive Council Liaison</i>	Nebraska VI, 2006
The Rt. Rev. C. Christopher Epting, <i>Deputy for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations</i>	
Dr. Thomas C. Ferguson, <i>Associate Deputy for the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations</i>	
The Rev. Dr. Gwynne Guibord, <i>Consultant to the OEIR</i>	
The Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright, <i>Consultant to OEIR and Historiographer of the Episcopal Church</i>	

II. WORK OF THE COMMISSION

A. Mandate

The mandate of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (SCEIR) is to recommend a comprehensive and coordinated policy and strategy on relations between this Church and other Churches, and other religions, to make recommendations concerning interchurch cooperation, unity, and interreligious dialogue, and action. It also nominates for appointment by the Presiding Bishop, persons to serve on the governing bodies of ecumenical and interreligious organizations to which this Church belongs and to receive reports from them which are also presented to the Presiding Bishop and Council [Canon I.1.2(n)(5)].

The Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (OEIR) works closely with the Commission. The OEIR is part of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, and is an extension of the Presiding Bishop's canonical charge as chief pastor and primate. The OEIR initiates and maintains ongoing work in ecumenical and interfaith relations, a record of which may be found at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/eir.htm>.

B. Action on Resolutions Referred by the 74th General Convention

2003–D025 Continue Efforts to End Racism: SCEIR responded by continuing involvement in the nine-church partnership known as Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC) and particularly its task force on Racism, participating in a March 2004 CUIC training event in Chicago for denominational staff, academics, and practitioners of anti-racism work. SCEIR also engaged itself in the Episcopal Church's anti-racism training in Louisville in April 2005. In addition, the same meeting heard about interreligious initiatives of partner denominations and explored racism in interreligious contexts.

2003–A085 Reception of ELCA members: The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee (LECC), which brought 2003–A085 to the SCEIR, continues to monitor the ways in which Lutherans are received into the Episcopal Church.

2003–A086 Request a Conversation on the Lutheran Ordination Bylaw: SCEIR received regular updates from its representatives on the LECC. This committee, made up of seven members from each church, meets twice each year to encourage and coordinate joint mission and ministry. Among many other things, LECC monitors the ways and extent to which the ELCA ordination bylaw exception may cause any additional limitation upon the full communion relationship that has been established. As of April 3, 2005, there have been only twenty-four exceptions to Episcopal ordination of pastors since the Call to Common Mission's (CCM) inauguration in January 2001 out of over 1,000 ordinations since that time. Further, such pastors are not interchangeable with the Episcopal Church under the terms of CCM. Thus it is SCEIR's considered opinion that limitations on full communion because of the ordination bylaw exception are minimal and should decrease over time.

2003–A087 Establish Interim Eucharistic Sharing with Moravian Church in America: As authorized by the resolution, the Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church in America have commenced a second round of bilateral dialogue, focused on the reconciliation of ordained ministries and any other outstanding issues as the two churches consider full communion with one another. The SCEIR continues to provide oversight to this dialogue.

2003–A088 Report the Church's Official Response to the Gift of Authority: The SCEIR's response to the document the *Gift of Authority* (produced by the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission and distributed to provinces of the Communion for response) was forwarded to the Anglican Communion Office after its official endorsement by the General Convention.

2003–A090 Reaffirm Christian-Muslim Dialogue: SCEIR monitored the successful completion of the Interfaith Education Initiative jointly sponsored by a grant from Episcopal Relief and Development and the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. Interfaith courses were offered in seminaries and dioceses, a website (www.interfaitheducationinitiative.org) established, and a successful conference held at the Washington National Cathedral in September 2004. A special interreligious committee of SCEIR has been formed and arranged for interreligious staff persons of major partner denominations to report on their church's interreligious work at the April 2005 SCEIR meeting. The Presiding Bishop's Deputy for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations addressed the Islamic Society of North America's Annual Conference of 2004 in Chicago. All these efforts were done in compliance with and with attention to 2003–A090.

2003–B003 Study and Present the Reuilly Accord: The 74th General Convention authorized the SCEIR to study a request from the French Reformed and Lutheran Churches that the Episcopal Church consider signing the Reuilly Accord which they concluded with the Church of England. As the Commission has deliberated on this request, it has become clear that the Reuilly Accord are a basic ecumenical agreement, with both parties mutually recognizing the other as a valid Christian church, but still far away from full communion. It would therefore seem appropriate that the Episcopal Church consider signing the Accord, as the Convocation of American Churches in Europe has a growing number of congregations in France, both Anglophone and native French. However, the disturbances in relations among Anglicans following the 74th General Convention have given pause to the dialogue

from the French churches which made the initial request, as the participants wait to see the outcome of the Lambeth Commission process.

The SCEIR therefore recommends that the matter receive further study until such time as may seem propitious for a renewed dialogue on signing the Reuilly Accord.

2003–B006 Continue Dialogue with the Reformed Episcopal Church and the Anglican Province in America:

While ongoing talks were held with the Reformed Episcopal Church (REC) and the Anglican Province of America (APA) in 2003 and 2004, given the present instability in the Anglican Communion, the parties involved have agreed to a mutual suspension—all sides were in agreement this was not a cancellation of the talks—for the time being. The OEIR has advised caution in appointing a subcommittee to research and render an opinion on the validity of Holy Orders in the Reformed Episcopal Church. SCEIR will continue to monitor developments in the upcoming triennium.

2003–CO31 End All Forms of Religious Persecution and War: In response to the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Episcopal Relief and Development provided a three year grant to develop a program for interreligious education to promote religious understanding and tolerance. SCEIR's support of the Interfaith Education Initiative led to the production of an Interfaith Education manual available through Episcopal Books and Resources. Sample interfaith worship services and principles for interfaith worship are available in the manual and on the website (www.interfaitheducationinitiative.org). A network of local interfaith groups involving Episcopalians stays connected through a list-serve managed by the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations in order to facilitate the sharing of resources for dialogue and worship.

C. RESOLUTIONS FOR THE 75TH GENERAL CONVENTION

I. Membership in Christian Churches Together in the USA

Christian Churches Together in the USA began in September 2001 with a meeting of church leaders in the United States to explore the need for expanding fellowship, unity, and witness among the diverse expressions of Christian faith today. They lamented the absence of any one place in the U.S. where representatives of historic Protestant, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, Evangelical, and Orthodox churches come together officially to strengthen their unity in Christ and empower their mission.

Another meeting convened in April 2002 to continue this exploration and invite broader participation from other churches. The next step was to agree on an organizational plan, including theological affirmations, purposes, categories of participation, a governing structure, and a proposed timeline. For further information see www.christianchurchestogether.org. An expanded group of 55 denominational and other church leaders met at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena in January 2003 for this purpose.

This proposal is now being presented to the various denominations and organizations that have been involved thus far in the process. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, our full communion partner, formally joined at their Churchwide Assembly in 2003. The Executive Council at its February 11-14, 2005 meeting in Austin, Texas, committed the Episcopal Church to be a founding member of this new organization. The 75th General Convention is being asked to ratify that decision.

Resolution A053 Affirm Membership in CCT-USA

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 75th General Convention affirm the action of the Executive
- 2 Council of the Episcopal Church, which during its meeting in Austin, TX, February 11-14, 2005, committed
- 3 the Episcopal Church to be a founding member of a new ecumenical organization known as Christian Churches
- 4 Together in the United States of America (CCT-USA).

EXPLANATION

The Episcopal Church has been involved in discussions for several years, with the National Council of Churches and others, about how to bring together Roman Catholics, Orthodox, mainline Protestants, primarily Ethnic churches, Evangelicals and Pentecostals in a new forum for prayer, dialogue, and action. This organization will not replace the National Council of Churches, but will exist alongside it with its full support.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops has committed the Roman Catholic Church to membership, making CCT-USA the first national ecumenical organization in this country they have joined. In addition, full members now include the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Church of God, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, The United Methodist Church, several Orthodox bodies, The Salvation Army, the United Church of Christ, Open Bible Churches, International Pentecostal Holiness Church, and Evangelicals for Social Action, World Vision, and a number of others.

The membership dues for the Episcopal Church's membership in CCT-USA will be modest and will come from the existing budget of the Office for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. This resolution will have no overall budget impact.

II. Guidelines for Ecumenical Participation in Ordinations

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (IASCER) has been established to monitor all Anglican ecumenical relations and to give non-binding advice wherever it thinks the same may be useful and helpful. Representatives to this international Anglican group from the Episcopal Church in the USA are Bishop C. Christopher Epting, Ecumenical Officer, and Canon Professor J. Robert Wright of the General Theological Seminary, both of whom serve in the category of members.

The resolution "Proposed Guidelines for Ecumenical Participation in Ordinations," was adopted by the commission at its meeting of December 2004 in Montego Bay, Jamaica, and referred to the Primates and provincial secretaries of the Anglican Communion. The guidelines, produced in response to many requests and much confusion, are addressed to situations in which Anglican bishops and priests are invited to participate in ordinations outside the Anglican Communion, or in which clergy of other churches are invited to participate in Anglican ordinations. They are not intended to address situations in which a church of the Anglican Communion is engaged in a process leading toward the establishment of communion with another church or churches.

The SCEIR commends the following resolution, based on the discussions of IASCER, as the official policy of this Church:

Resolution A054 Ecumenical Participation in Ordinations

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the "Guidelines for Ecumenical Participation in Ordinations"
- 2 formulated by the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations and proposed for all churches
- 3 of the Anglican Communion, be hereby adopted as the standard to be followed by this Church in all situations
- 4 in which Anglican bishops and priests are invited to participate in ordinations outside the Anglican Communion,
- 5 or in which clergy of other churches are invited to participate in Anglican ordinations; and be it further
- 6 *Resolved*, That all Bishops and Standing Committees of every diocese of the Episcopal Church be forthwith
- 7 informed of the decision to follow these Guidelines henceforward as the standard for Ecumenical Participation
- 8 in Ordinations when such questions arise.
- 9 The Guidelines follow:
- 10 1a. It is appropriate for Anglican bishops, when invited, to participate in Episcopal ordinations or consecrations
- 11 in churches with which their own churches are in communion, including the laying on of hands. Within this
- 12 ecclesial context, the laying on of hands is an indication of the intent to confer holy orders, and a sign of the
- 13 communion that we share.
- 14 1b. Anglican bishops should refrain from participating in the laying on of hands at the ordination or consecration
- 15 of a bishop for a church with which their own church is not in communion. Ordination is always an act of
- 16 God in and through the church, which from the Anglican perspective means that bishops are representative
- 17 ministers of their own churches. Ordination is not the individual act of bishops in their own persons.
- 18 1c. Similarly, bishops from other churches not in communion should not take part in the laying on of hands
- 19 at the ordination or consecration of Anglican bishops, for the collegial and sacramental sign of the laying on
- 20 the hands by bishops belongs within the context of ecclesial communion.
- 21 1d. Anglicans welcome the participation of bishops from other churches in the Liturgy of the Word and
- 22 elsewhere in celebrations of Episcopal ordination or consecration. Their very presence and prayers are valued

- 1 ecumenical signs, even when the present state of ecclesial relations does not permit the interchangeability of
 2 sacramental ministries.
- 3 2a. It is appropriate for Anglican priests, when invited, to participate in ordinations of presbyters in churches
 4 with which their church is in communion, including the laying on of hands. Such acts are a sign of the
 5 communion that we share.
- 6 2b. Anglican priests should not take part in the laying on of hands in the ordinations of ministers of word and
 7 sacrament in churches with which their own church is not in communion, because such an act belongs within
 8 the context of ecclesial communion
- 9 2c. Similarly, ministers from churches not in communion should not take part in the laying on of hands at the
 10 ordination of Anglican priests, because this too belongs within the context of ecclesial communion.
- 11 2d. Anglicans welcome the participation of presbyters and other ministers of word and sacrament from other
 12 churches in the Liturgy of the Word and elsewhere in celebrations of priestly ordination. The very presence
 13 and prayers of such ministers are valued ecumenical signs, even when the present state of ecclesial relations
 14 does not permit the interchangeability of sacramental ministries.

III. Interim Eucharistic Sharing with the United Methodist Church

The United Methodist-Episcopal Church bilateral was authorized by the 2000 General Convention and has met eight times from 2002–2006. The dialogue set its goals as “full communion, including interchangeability of ministries, for the sake of common mission and witness.” The dialogue builds on the work of the International Anglican-Methodist dialogue authorized by the Anglican Communion Office and the World Methodist Council, which produced the 1996 statement *Sharing in the Apostolic Communion*. This document was commended to the provinces of the Communion by the 1998 Lambeth Conference of Bishops. The bilateral has likewise been resourced by the work of the Church of England-British Methodist Conference dialogue, which in 2002 entered into a significant covenanting process leading towards reunion.

The SCEIR submits the following resolution to the 75th General Convention. The United Methodist-Episcopal Bilateral dialogue has produced a study guide to provide background materials to the resolution and has collected and edited the papers presented to the dialogue to assist bishops and deputies.

Resolution A055 UMC Interim Eucharistic Sharing

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 75th General Convention of the Episcopal Church:
- 2 1. Welcome and rejoice in the substantial progress of The United Methodist-Episcopal Dialogue and of
 3 international conversations between Anglicans and Methodists, and give thanks for the Anglican-Methodist
 4 Covenant in Great Britain. We look forward to the day when full communion is established between the
 5 Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church;
- 6 2. Recognize now The United Methodist Church as a member of the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church
 7 in which the Gospel is rightly preached and taught;
- 8 3. Encourage the development of common Christian life throughout our respective Churches by such means
 9 as the following:
- 10 a) Mutual prayer and mutual support, including parochial/congregational and diocesan/annual conference
 11 covenants or agreements,
- 12 b) Common study of the Holy Scriptures, the histories and theological traditions of each Church, and
 13 the materials produced by The United Methodist-Episcopal Dialogue.
- 14 c) Joint programs of religious education, theological discussion, mission, evangelism, and social action,
 15 d) Joint use of facilities;
- 16 4. Affirm now on the basis of the documents
- 17 a) *Sharing in the Apostolic Communion*, produced by the International Anglican-Methodist Conversations in
 18 1996;
- 19 b) the “Constitution and Canons” of the Episcopal Church and the “Book of Common Prayer” of the
 20 Episcopal Church;

- 1 c) The United Methodist “Book of Worship” and the “Book of Discipline” of The United Methodist
2 Church;
- 3 d) and the documents “This Holy Mystery” on the Lord’s Supper and “By Water and the Spirit” on
4 Baptism affirmed by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church that the basic teaching
5 of each respective Church is consonant with the Gospel and is sufficiently compatible with the teaching
6 of this Church that a relationship of Interim Sharing of the Eucharist is hereby established between
7 The United Methodist Church and the Episcopal Church under the following guidelines:
- 8 i. The Episcopal Church extends a special welcome to members of The United Methodist Church
9 to receive Holy Communion in it under the Standard for Occasional Eucharistic Sharing of its
10 1979 General Convention. This welcome constitutes a mutual recognition of Eucharistic teaching
11 sufficient for Interim Sharing of the Eucharist, although this does not intend to signify that final
12 recognition of each other's ministries has yet been achieved.
- 13 ii. Bishops and Dioceses of the Episcopal Church and Bishops of The United Methodist Church
14 may by mutual agreement extend the regulations of Church discipline to permit common, joint
15 celebration of the Eucharist within their jurisdictions. This is appropriate in particular situations
16 where the said authorities deem that local conditions are appropriate for the sharing of worship
17 jointly by congregations of the respective Churches. The presence of an ordained minister of each
18 participating Church at the altar in this way reflects the presence of two or more Churches expressing
19 unity in faith and baptism as well as the remaining divisions which they seek to overcome; however,
20 this does not imply rejection or final recognition of either Church's Eucharist or ministry. In such
21 circumstances the Eucharistic prayer will be from an approved liturgy as authorized jointly by the
22 Bishops of the Episcopal Diocese and The United Methodist Episcopal Area.
- 23 iii. This resolution and experience of Interim Sharing of the Eucharist will be communicated at regular
24 intervals to other Churches of the World Methodist Council and the Anglican Communion
25 throughout the world, as well as to the various ecumenical dialogues in which Anglicans and
26 Methodists are engaged, especially Churches Uniting in Christ, in order that consultation may be
27 fostered, similar experiences encouraged elsewhere, and already existing relationships of full
28 communion respected;
- 29 5. Authorize continued United Methodist-Episcopal Dialogues for the discussion of any other outstanding
30 questions that must be resolved before full communion can be established between the respective Churches,
31 e.g., historic episcopate, and the ordering of ministry (Bishops, Priests, and Deacons) in the total context
32 of apostolicity.

EXPLANATION

The Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church have been in dialogue as members of the multilateral Consultation on Church Union/Churches Uniting in Christ for nearly forty years and have been authorized to share in the celebration of the Eucharist in the context of COCU/CUIC. The establishment of Interim Eucharistic Sharing between the two churches will allow for a more intentional focus on our bilateral relationship. The Episcopal-United Methodist bilateral dialogue was established by the 2000 General Convention and in the 2002–2006 period met regularly and reviewed the sacramental teaching of both churches. On the basis of these documents the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations feels confident in recommending Interim Eucharistic Sharing be established while the two churches continue to work for full communion, including interchangeability of ordained ministries.

IV. Interreligious Relations

As noted above, the 74th General Convention formally charged the SCEIR with oversight of this Church’s interreligious relations in addition to ecumenical relations. The SCEIR sought appointment of members with particular gifts and skills in interreligious relations. In addition, the Commission devoted a significant portion of its April 2005 meeting to formulating a strategy for interreligious relations. Ecumenical partners, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and representatives from the National Council of Churches and the U.S.

Conference of Catholic Bishops, were invited to share their own work in interreligious relations. The Commission wishes to engage in as much of this work as ecumenically as possible, but also believes the Episcopal Church has particular perspectives to offer in interreligious relations.

The Commission also heard from prominent scholars and theologians on the theology of interreligious relations, and there was considerable discussion on the convergences and divergences in approaching interreligious relations as opposed to ecumenical relations. While the Episcopal Church has been guided for more than 100 years by the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, no similar rationale or grounding exists for interreligious dialogue. The SCEIR commissioned a task force to formulate a statement upon which this Church would conduct interreligious relations. Drawing upon Episcopal formularies, as well as in consultation with the Network for Interfaith Concerns of the Anglican Communion, the SCEIR presents the following resolution to the General Convention for endorsement.

Resolution A056 Interreligious Relations

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 75th General Convention acknowledge our baptismal identity
- 2 as essential to who we are as Christians, and that it commits us, among other things, “to serve Christ in all
- 3 persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves” (BCP page 305), and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That the 75th General Convention of the Episcopal Church endorse the following statement as a basis
- 5 for engaging in interreligious dialogue:
- 6 We affirm that the universe is the creation of a single loving God and is ours to care for in accordance
- 7 with God’s purposes of respecting and honoring all who are created in the image of God (BCP, Catechism,
- 8 page 846).
- 9 We acknowledge that the human family is broken by the power of sin and that Jesus’ Good News was
- 10 given to the Church so that, with the help of God, we may live in harmony with God, within ourselves,
- 11 with our neighbors, and with all creation (BCP, Catechism, page 849).
- 12 We affirm the centrality of Jesus’ Summary of God’s Law which calls upon us to love the Lord our God
- 13 with all our hearts, with all our souls, and with all our minds and that this first, great commandment leads
- 14 to God’s command to love our neighbors as ourselves (BCP, Catechism, page 851).
- 15 Therefore we commend to all our members dialogue for building relationships, the sharing of information,
- 16 religious education, and celebration with people of other religions as part of Christian life with the
- 17 understanding that:
 - 18 1. dialogue begins when people meet each other
 - 19 2. dialogue depends upon mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual trust
 - 20 3. dialogue makes it possible to share in service to the community
 - 21 4. dialogue is a medium of authentic witness by all parties and not an opportunity for proselytizing
- 22 We believe that such dialogue may be a contribution toward helping people of different religions grow in
- 23 mutual understanding and make common cause in peacemaking, social justice, and religious liberty.
- 24 We further commend that dioceses, parishes, and other organizations of the Episcopal Church initiate
- 25 such dialogue in partnership with other Christian Churches and in consultation with other provinces of
- 26 the Communion, where appropriate in all cases.

EXPLANATION

In 2003 the General Convention of the Episcopal Church officially renamed the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (SCEIR). As part of its work in the 2004–2006 triennium the SCEIR concluded that while the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral served as the theological rationale for engagement in ecumenical dialogue, there was no official corresponding basis for this Church’s involvement in interreligious relations. Therefore the preceding statement is meant to provide guidance for the work this church has been doing and to encourage new and continuing forms of dialogue between Episcopalians and persons of other faiths.

The resolution is based upon Resolution 20 of the 1988 Lambeth Conference, which founded the Network for Inter Faith Concerns (NIFCON).

D. Ongoing General Convention Mandates

Anglican Roman Catholic Consultation in the USA

Since the 74th General Convention, ARCUSA has continued to meet semi-annually, without interruption. Meetings regularly include discussion of developments in each Church, assessment of major documents, and ongoing work on projects that, it is hoped, will contribute to fuller communion between the two Churches. During this triennium, ARCUSA has had frank and collegial discussions of the actions of the 74th General Convention and responses to it, including The Windsor Report. ARCUSA has begun discussion of ARCIC's *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* and will issue a statement on this agreed statement in due course.

Constructive work has continued in two areas. First, ARCUSA has created a five-week study program to be used in Anglican-Roman Catholic discussion groups at the parish or diocesan level. *God's Gift of Unity* uses the central material from ARACIC I's *Final Report* on baptism, the Eucharist and communion, along with a structured program of prayer, study, and discussion. The purposes of this program include deepening mutual understanding among lay members of our two Churches, and fostering reception of ARCIC's work and the two Churches' responses to it.

Second, work continues on an agreed report on national/provincial levels of authority in the two churches and how these levels mediate to some extent between the local and the worldwide church. The report builds on ARCUSA's 1999 *Agreed Report on the Local/Universal Church*, focusing on the selection of bishops in each church to illuminate how each church enacts its understanding of authority in the USA context. Its purpose is to further understanding between the two Churches, and within and between our two worldwide communions.

Presbyterian-Episcopal Bilateral

The bilateral dialogue between the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA) and the Episcopal Church was established by the 2000 General Convention and has met eight times from 2002–2006. While Presbyterians and Episcopalians have historically had several different rounds of dialogue, the current bilateral dates from the formation of Churches Uniting in Christ in January of 2002. Much of the dialogue's discussions have centered on Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation of Ministries, particularly responding to the draft document produced by the Churches Uniting in Christ Ministry Task Force. Substantive issues considered by the dialogue include the Historic Episcopate and the role of the presbyter and practice of "Corporate Episkope" in both churches.

International Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue

Since the 74th General Convention, the International Commission on Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialog (ICAOTD) has held its annual meetings as scheduled, without interruption. At the 2004 meeting in Canterbury, work continued on Christology, theology of ministry (ordained and lay, men and women), cultural and anthropological theology, and identity, unity and diversity. The profound trust and candor among the dialogue members has allowed engagement with difficult questions and issues and at the same time to frame these matters from both Anglican and Orthodox perspectives that open the discussions and increase understanding. In 2004, initial papers from Anglican and Orthodox theologians on schism and heresy were received along with an initial draft of the final document on these topics. In 2005, the Commission was hosted on Cyprus by the Orthodox Church of Cyprus and brought to completion the work of this phase of the dialogue. The final two documents on heresy and schism were finalized. 2006 will be the final meeting of this phase of the dialogue, meeting in England to present the final compilation of the work of this Commission over the past 14 years. In addition to presenting the Commission's work, the Commission will also present to the Anglican Communion and the Orthodox Churches the recommendation that the dialogues be continued.

Philippine Independent Church-Episcopal Church Concordat Council

Believing that any full communion relationship must be nourished and tended if it is to be more than simply a paper agreement, the Concordat Council of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) and the Protestant Episcopal Church USA reconvened after a hiatus at the Serra Retreat Center, Malibu, California April 12–15, 2005.

The history between the two churches was reviewed. Hopes and expectations brought to the meeting included: consolidating the previous ecumenical agreements made in the Council and implementing these for the continuing mission of the Church; developing a more systematic response to the needs of the churches, e.g. pension fund; finding ways where the two churches can do mission together; through the Council, providing greater advocacy work in the both churches on matters such as displaced people, refugees, peace, violence, women, human rights; understanding the historical backgrounds that led to the formation of the Council; acknowledging and appreciating the gifts that each participant brings to the ecumenical table; and examining the Charter of the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee as a model for continuing partnership.

Outcomes and goals set throughout the meeting included, giving substance to the Honolulu agreement, updating a list of IFI Clergy in the USA. Of particular significance is that both churches will have new leadership in the near future; a new Obispo Maximo of the IFI was elected on May 8, 2005 and a new Presiding Bishop will be elected in June of 2006.

Churches Uniting in Christ

Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC), formerly known as the Consultation on Church Union, is a relationship between nine church bodies which have a compelling spirit of unity and have been working together since 1961 to make that unity more visible. The nine communions—The African Methodist Episcopal Church; The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; The Christian Church, Disciples of Christ; The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; The Episcopal Church; The International Council of Community Churches; The Presbyterian Church, USA; and The United Methodist Church—have now been joined by two new “Partners in Mission and Dialogue” – The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Northern Province of the Moravian Church.

This triennium has seen the production of the 7th draft of a document proposing the “Mutual Recognition and Mutual Reconciliation of Ministries.” Episcopal members of the drafting team included The Rt. Rev. Stacy Sauls and The Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright. The document has now been offered to the nine churches for reflection and response, in various venues, including through the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers network, seminaries, and bishops.

The Racial Justice Task Force, mindful of CUIC's commitment to stand together as churches against racism, has developed resource material for the observance of *Talk About Race Sunday* which can be used in local congregations. The material is available through OEIR or on the CUIC website www.cuic.org.

National Council of Churches

Since its founding in 1950, the NCCCUSA has been a leading force for ecumenical cooperation among Christians in the U.S. The NCC's member faith groups, representing Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, historic African American, and peace churches, include 45 million persons in more than 100,000 local congregations.

The work of the Council is carried out by five commissions: Communications, Education and Leadership Ministries, Faith and Order, Interfaith Relations, Justice and Advocacy. The NCC also advances biblical and theological scholarship and provided the translation process that produced the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Members engage in humanitarian work in more than 80 countries through Church World Service and Witness and deal with public policy issues through its Washington office. The NCC maintains working relationships with the Roman Catholic Church and certain Evangelical and Pentecostal churches, and seeks to promote harmonious relations among Christian, Jews, Muslims, and many other faith groups in a society that is increasingly multireligious.

In 2004 the Let Justice Roll campaign collaborated with partners across the country to make poverty an election year issue and continues to campaign for a living wage for working people by tackling budget and tax fairness issues. Contacts with Asian Christians were renewed by two trips to the region (Sri Lanka and Indonesia) following the tsunami. A delegation to Israel/Palestine in 2005 brought a message home in the delegation statement “Barriers Do Not Bring Freedom.” Yet the NCC is also taking part in a historic trip of Christian and Jewish leaders to the Holy Land to “see through each others’ eyes” in this time of tension in our long relationship.

The NCC is now in a strategic planning process building on the Council's continuing financial stability. FY 2204–2005 marked the fourth year in a row that revenues exceeded expenditures. The Presiding Bishop nominates and Executive Council approves the Episcopal Church's delegates to the 300 member annual Assembly. Dr. OC Edwards, Bishop Christopher Epting, and Ms. Virginia Paul serve on the Governing Board which meets several times each year.

World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches, based in Geneva, Switzerland, brings together more than 340 churches in over 100 countries, representing some 400 million Christians. They include most of the world's Orthodox churches, scores of denominations from the Reformation tradition, as well as many united and independent churches. Such churches are called to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one Eucharistic fellowship, to promote common witness in mission and evangelism, to engage in Christian service by serving human need, and to foster renewal in unity, worship, mission, and service.

The contributions of the WCC range from Faith and Order conversations to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the Programme to Combat Racism and the Decade to Overcome Violence, to inter-religious dialogue and relations with other faith communities. The every-seven-year WCC Assembly was held in Porto Alegre, Brazil in February 2006 and the Episcopal Church was represented by The Rev. Cynthia Black, Ms. Carmen Brooks, The Rt. Rev. Chris Epting, Ms. Sarah Hart, and The Rev. Kwasi Thornell. Bishop Epting also serves on the Central Committee of the WCC. The Council's annual budget is approximately \$37 million toward which the Episcopal Church contributes approximately \$170,000.

Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers Network

At the 2005 Annual Meeting, the Ecumenical and Associate Ecumenical Officers voted to add the word "Interreligious" to its title, reflecting formally the full operation of the organization. EDEO is now Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers (EDEIO).

In April 2005, the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU) and the EDEIO Annual Meeting, were both held in New Orleans. New Orleans ecumenists were wonderful hosts and the meetings were quite successful. The sadness that the devastation caused in that city by hurricane Katrina was especially distressing.

Recognizing the importance of our future clergy having a clear vision of ecumenical and interreligious activity, EDEIO, in coordination with the leadership of our Lutheran and Roman Catholic network counterparts, is co-sponsoring an essay contest for seminarians. The subject is "Ecumenism in the 21st Century," and each Network is asking students to reflect on documents relating to the Lutheran-RC, Episcopal-Lutheran, and Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogues on the topic: "what constructive advice would you give to church leaders about the present and future needs of Christian fellowship and unity?" EDEIO sent letters to Episcopal seminaries asking the Deans to encourage students to participate. Students will be competing only against entries from within their own denominations and the EDEIO Executive Committee will determine the Episcopal Seminarian winner, inviting the individual to give her/his winning essay at the NWCU, being held in San Jose, in 2006. If successful, similar EDEIO contests will be offered in future years.

Members of the EDEIO organization, have continued to participate in the many ecumenical dialogues, notably Moravian, Methodist, Presbyterian, ARCUSA, as well as interreligious activities with Muslims, Jews and others, while encouraging deeper understanding of CCM and CUIC at local levels.

III. BUDGET REPORT

The Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations will meet approximately five times during the 2007–2009 triennium. This will require \$35,000 in 2007, \$35,000 in 2009, and \$20,000 in 2009 for a total of \$90,000 for the triennium.