

STANDING COMMISSION ON ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

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The Very Rev. Samuel Candler, <i>Representative PHOD</i>	Atlanta, IV, 2009
The Rt. Rev. C. Christopher Epting, <i>Deputy for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations</i>	
Dr. Thomas Ferguson, <i>Associate Deputy for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations</i>	
The Rev. Dr. Gwynne Guibord, <i>Consultant for Interreligious Relations</i>	
The Rev. Canon David Veal and The Rev. Susan Gaumer, <i>EDEIO Liaisons</i>	
The Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright, <i>Consultant and Historiographer of The Episcopal Church</i>	

WORK OF THE COMMISSION

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 Interreligious Relations (OEIR) is part of the Partnerships Center and works closely with the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The OEIR initiates and maintains ongoing work in ecumenical and interreligious relations, a record of which may be found at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ecumenism>.

ACTION ON RESOLUTIONS REFERRED BY THE 75TH GENERAL CONVENTION

A055: INTERIM EUCHARISTIC SHARING WITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The 2006 General Convention approved an Interim Eucharistic Sharing Agreement with the United Methodist Church. Since that time there have been numerous Eucharistic services celebrated or approved by our bishops in accordance with the Common Guidelines. A study guide entitled "Make Us One With Christ" is available for congregations to facilitate fellowship, and for download at www.episcopalchurch.org/ecumenism. The Dialogue team is currently in the process of drafting a theological statement that will identify areas of theological convergence, those issues which need further discussion and reflection, and to consider possibilities for moving forward in reconciliation of ordained ministries through sharing in the historic episcopate. In addition, the Dialogue has begun to address the way in which race and racism has functioned as a church dividing issue; and the SCEIR is exploring tangible ways to involve the historically African American Methodist Episcopal Churches (AME, CME, and AMEZ) in this dialogue. A consultation, planned for October 2009, will include The Episcopal

Church, United Methodist Church and historically African American Methodist churches. The SCEIR proposes the following Resolution in light of our continuing relationship with the United Methodist Church.

RESOLUTION FOR THE 76TH GENERAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION A072 INTERIM EUCHARISTIC SHARING WITH THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention gives thanks for the relationship of
- 2 Interim Eucharistic Sharing with the United Methodist Church and commends the work of this dialogue to
- 3 dioceses and congregations of The Episcopal Church.

D020: OPPOSE THE WAR IN IRAQ AND SUPPORT NONVIOLENT MEANS TO ENDING CONFLICT

The Presiding Bishop's Deputy for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, along with the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, has continued efforts at nonviolent resolution to conflict through active participation in the World Council of Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence program and the National Council of Churches Interfaith Commission. The Episcopal Church is also active in organizations such Religions for Peace, as well as in Jewish-Christian and Christian-Muslim dialogue groups. These efforts have included peace-building trips to Lebanon, Israel-Palestine and Egypt, as well as attendance at a special meeting of the newly formed Interfaith Council of Religious Institutions in the Middle East during their visit to Washington, DC.

D080: MORAVIAN-EPISCOPAL DIALOGUE.

This Resolution commended the work of the Moravian-Episcopal Dialogue. The work of this dialogue continues; see the Resolution on full communion below.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE REFERRED TO ALL CCABS.

D031: BUDGET PRIORITIES

The Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations seeks to fulfill the priorities for mission as outlined by the 75th General Convention in Resolution D031 in the following ways:

- Partnership: the majority of our work is aimed towards nurturing relationships through multi-lateral, bilateral and other dialogues, by working with other provinces of the Anglican Communion and with interreligious partners.
- Justice and Peace: apart from the specific work in building relations in the Middle East and especially Iraq (see response to Resolution D020), our work in the WCC, NCC and Churches Uniting in Christ involves the Commission and this church in advocacy, justice and peace making enterprises.
- Youth and Young Adults: are served by intentional representation on the Commission, itself, as well as promotion of ecumenical events geared towards young adults and educational opportunities. The SCEIR is committed to working to engage a new generation of Episcopal leaders in the ecumenical movement and to provide opportunities for ecumenical formation.
- Congregational Development: one of the fruits of Called to Common Mission is the joint strengthening of congregational life by the interchange of clergy between Lutherans and Episcopalians, the creation of joint congregations and mission efforts, much of which is monitored by the Lutheran/Episcopal Coordinating Committee. Similar efforts are envisioned through the development of closer relations with the United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church USA and Moravians.
- Reconciliation and Evangelism: linked with the concept of building partnerships, ecumenism stands at the heart of establishing ways in which the Church Catholic can proclaim God's gift of reconciliation with one voice. In particular, our work on an interreligious statement lays the groundwork for this in an interreligious context, and our commitment to anti-racism work in Churches Uniting in Christ is a similar sign of these efforts at reconciliation.

A159: INTERDEPENDENCE IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

In the spirit of Resolution A159, and as a visible sign of our interdependence in the Anglican Communion, members of SCEIR have served during this triennium on various Anglican Communion bodies, including the Network of Interfaith Concerns (NIFCON), the Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations

(IASCER) and Anglican-Lutheran and Anglican-Methodist international commissions. In addition, Commission members and staff travel widely across the Communion attending various meetings and educational events.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE REFERRED TO THE SCEIR FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES; NO ACTION WAS REQUIRED BY THE COMMISSION DURING THE TRIENNium.

A025, Amend Canon I.

A026, Amend Canon III.12.d.1

RESOLUTIONS FOR THE 76TH GENERAL CONVENTION

MORAVIAN-EPISCOPAL DIALOGUE

The 1997 General Convention authorized a dialogue with the Northern Province and Southern Province of the Moravian Church. The 74th General Convention in 2003 established Interim Eucharistic Sharing between our churches. The Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations presents the following proposal to establish full communion, including sharing in the historic episcopate and interchangeability of ministries.

The proposed full communion partnership is a unique opportunity to restore unity with the oldest church of the “first reformation”, descendants of the Czech Reform movement begun by Jan Huss (d. 1415). Moravians are intensely missional, highly relational, have a rich musical and liturgical heritage and are led by a deeply pastoral episcopate. These are among the many gifts from which The Episcopal Church can learn and benefit in a full communion partnership. Through long periods of exile and persecution, Moravians have struggled to retain the three historic orders of ministry and to be faithful to a call to minister to “the last, the least, and the lost.”

“Finding Our Delight in the Lord” articulates the gifts Moravians and Episcopalians each bring to a relationship of full communion and details the content and process for fully reconciling the orders of ministry as each church understands them.

Drafts of the document have been referred for review and feedback to The Episcopal Church Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations and the Provincial Elders Conferences of the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Church. Also consulted were scholars and leaders from the worldwide Moravian Church, and this proposal has been submitted for comment and feedback to the International Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops, the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers network and to the Division of Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Comments were carefully weighed and are reflected in the final draft. The Moravian Church will consider an identical proposal at its Provincial Synods in 2010.

In addition to work on the agreement, the dialog team has created programs to facilitate congregation-to-congregation conversation and missional activity between Episcopalians and Moravians. Further information, including a Commentary/Executive Summary of the proposal and a list of Frequently Asked Questions, may be found at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ecumenism>.

CURRENT EPISCOPAL MEMBERS OF THE DIALOGUE TEAM:

The Rt. Rev. Steven Miller, *Co-Chair*

Dr. Roderick Dugliss, *Liaison to Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations*

The Rev. Dr. Marion Hatchett

The Rev. Thomas Rightmyer, D.Min.

The Rev. Maria Tjeltvait

The Rev. Canon David Veal

The Very Rev. W. Nicholas Knisely

Dr. Thomas Ferguson, *Staff Support*

RESOLUTION A073 MORAVIAN-EPISCOPAL DIALOGUE

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church accept
2 *Finding our Delight in the Lord* as set forth following as the basis for a relationship of full communion to be
3 established between The Episcopal Church and the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Church;
4 and be it further

5
6 *Resolved*, That Title I, Canon 20, Section 2 be amended to include the Moravian Church in America, Northern and
7 Southern Provinces, as Churches in full communion with this Church.

8
9 Official Text:

10
11 Finding Our Delight in the Lord:
12 A Proposal for Full Communion
13 Between
14 The Episcopal Church;
15 the Moravian Church—Northern Province; and
16 the Moravian Church—Southern Province
17

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35
36 **I. Preface**

37 1. Preaching at the opening service of the Second World Conference of Faith and Order in 1937, William
38 Temple (then Archbishop of York and later Archbishop of Canterbury) noted two “great evils” caused by the
39 divisions of the church:

40
41 The first is that [the divisions] obscure our witness to the one Gospel; the second is that through the division
42 each party to it loses some spiritual treasure, and none perfectly represents the balance of truth, so that this
43 balance of truth is not presented to the world at all.¹
44

45 It is because of these two “great evils” of Christian disunity that our churches—The Episcopal Church and
46 the Moravian Church in America (Northern and Southern Provinces)—have pursued a formal dialogue
47 resulting in this proposal for full communion, a necessary step toward “the goal of visible unity in one faith

¹ William Temple, “Sermon at the Opening Service” in Michael Kinnamon and Brian E. Cope, (eds.) *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, 18.

48 and one Eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship and common life in Christ.”² We seek this relationship
49 of full communion so that our mission as Christ’s church will be more effectively fulfilled and each of our
50 communions might be more complete because of the spiritual treasures of the other; and we do this for the
51 sake of the world, “so that the world may believe.”³
52

53 We have also been motivated by the ecumenical history and legacy of our two churches. For Moravians,
54 ecumenical commitment is rooted in the vision of Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, bishop and
55 theologian of the renewed *Unitas Fratrum*. In the spirit of Count Zinzendorf’s ecumenical commitment,
56 “The Ground of the Unity,” endorsed and accepted by all the provinces of the Moravian Church, states that
57 “through the grace of Christ the different denominations have received many gifts and that the Church of
58 Christ may be enriched by these many and varied contributions. It is our desire that we may learn from one
59 another and rejoice together in the riches of the love of Christ and the manifold wisdom of God. We
60 welcome every step that brings us nearer the goal of unity in Him.”⁴ The Episcopal Church’s ecumenical
61 commitment is expressed through the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral (endorsed by numerous General
62 Conventions of The Episcopal Church and Lambeth Conferences of Bishops), which commits The
63 Episcopal Church to the search for the more visible unity of the church on the basis of what it considers the
64 essentials of the Christian faith. It is the prayer of all who have participated in this dialogue that *Finding Our
65 Delight in the Lord: A Proposal for Full Communion* may empower our churches to share their treasures with each
66 other, strengthen their witness to the Gospel, and advance the unity and renewal of the church.
67

68 On the basis of this agreement, The Episcopal Church, the Northern Province of the Moravian Church, and
69 the Southern Province of the Moravian Church agree that, in their respective General Convention and
70 Provincial Synods, there shall be one vote to accept or reject, without amendment, the full set of agreements
71 to follow. If adopted, each church agrees to make the legislative and any other necessary changes appropriate
72 for full communion between the churches.
73

74 **II. Introduction**

75 2. At their respective 2002 Synods the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Church voted to enter
76 into a relationship of Interim Eucharistic Sharing with The Episcopal Church. In August of 2003 the General
77 Convention of The Episcopal Church passed an identical Resolution. These actions inaugurated a
78 relationship of Interim Eucharistic Sharing between the two churches. Building upon over two centuries of
79 ecumenical dialogues between Anglicans and Moravians,⁵ the Moravian-Episcopal Dialogue, meeting from
80 1999–2003, and working from the Fetter Lane Declaration,⁶ came to consensus on the fundamental aspects
81 of the Christian faith and recognized one another as belonging to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic
82 church.⁷ Since 2003, the Moravian-Episcopal Dialogue has focused on the one remaining issue upon which

² *Toward a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches*, 3.10, www.coe.org/wcc/who/cuv-e.html.

³ John 17:20–21: “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.” (NRSV)

⁴ *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum (Moravian Church) 2002*, “The Ground of the Unity,” para. 6.

⁵ For the background on Anglican-Moravian relations, see *Anglican-Moravian Conversations: The Fetter Lane Common Statement with Essays in Anglican and Moravian History* (London: Council for Christian Unity, 1996), 72–82.

⁶ From 1989–1995 the Church of England and the Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland engaged in a dialogue which produced substantial theological agreement, as well as noted areas upon which consensus had not been reached. This dialogue summarized their work in *Anglican-Moravian Conversations*, and in the *Fetter Lane Declaration* the two churches “acknowledged one another’s churches as belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church” and committed “to share a common life and mission.” See *Anglican-Moravian Conversations*, 30–32.

⁷ See Resolution A087 of the 74th General Convention; Resolution 23 of the 2002 Southern Province Synod; First Partial Report, Committee on Ecumenical Affairs and Faith and Order, 2002 Northern Province Synod. See also “The Meaning of Full Communion for Moravians,” as approved by the 2006 Synod of the Moravian Church–Northern, Fifth and Final Partial Report, Mission with Our Ecumenical Partners, Resolution 11.

83 consensus has not been reached: the ordained ministry. An interchangeable ministry is an essential element of
84 each of our churches' understanding of full communion with another Christian denomination.⁸
85

- 86 3. The Moravian-Episcopal Dialogue has set full communion, defined as follows, as the means to the greater
87 unity to which our churches strive, and for which we believe our Lord prayed (John 17:20–22):

88 We understand full communion to be a living relationship between distinct churches in which they
89 recognize each other as catholic⁹ and apostolic churches holding the essentials of the Christian faith,
90 whereby the reconciliation, mutual availability, and interchangeability of ordained ministries is then fully
91 possible. Full communion is not the same as organic union or merger. Rather, it is widely recognized as a
92 significant expression of the full visible unity of all Christians, which we do not yet discern but for which
93 we pray. Within this full communion, we understand that the churches are fully interdependent while
94 remaining responsible for their own decisions. Full communion includes a commitment to establish,
95 locally and nationally, recognized organs of regular consultation and communication in order to express
96 and strengthen the fellowship and enable common witness, life, and service. Striving to end our divisions
97 but to preserve our diversity, neither of our churches seeks to remake the other in its own image, and
98 each seeks to be open to the gifts of the other as it seeks to be faithful to Christ and his mission. Each
99 church shall be open to the encouragement and admonition of the other church for the sake of the
100 gospel.¹⁰
101

- 102 4. The two churches have also put forward their understandings of the basis upon which full communion is to
103 be reached. For the Moravian Church in America, this understanding is found in “The Ground of the Unity,”
104 and for The Episcopal Church in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral.
105

- 106 5. “The Ground of the Unity,” first adopted by the international synod of the Moravian Church in 1957, is a
107 brief statement of the Moravian understanding of Christian faith and discipleship. Its ecclesiological
108 paragraphs define the church as a unity, a fellowship, and a community of service. “The Ground of the
109 Unity” affirms, first and foremost, that Christian unity is God-given and that our Savior is leading us to its
110 ever deeper realization. Moravians recognize that “through the grace of Christ the different churches have
111 received many gifts,”¹¹ all of them necessary for the up building of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:15–17).
112 The Moravian Church understands its particular calling to be the promotion of Christian unity among the
113 denominations in the service of more effective mission. Moravians believe that, even though ecumenical
114 engagement is “laid upon us as a charge,” unity cannot be achieved by human effort alone but is received as
115 an unfolding promise from the Lord. In the words of “The Ground of the Unity,” “We believe in and
116 confess the unity of the Church, given in the one Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior. He died that he might
117 unite the scattered children of God. As the living Lord and Shepherd, he is leading his flock toward such
118 unity.... It is the Lord’s will that Christendom should give evidence of and seek unity in Him with zeal and
119 love.”¹² “The Unitas Fratrum is committed to the unity of the children of God as a reality created by God in
120 Jesus Christ.”¹³
121

⁸ See the Guidelines on Unity endorsed by the 1979 General Convention: “The visible unity we seek is one eucharistic fellowship....In this communion the churches will all recognize each other’s members and ministries....” See also *Called to Common Mission: A Lutheran Proposal for a Revision of the Concordat of Agreement* (hereafter *CCM*), para. 2; see also “Meaning of Full Communion for Moravians,” 2006 Northern Province Synod and 2002 Southern Province Synod.

⁹ Our two churches are catholic in the original sense of the word, meaning “universal.” The Episcopal Church understands itself to be catholic in that it “proclaims the whole Faith to all people, to the end of time” (*Book of Common Prayer*, hereafter *BCP*, 854). The Moravian Church likewise understands catholic to mean “universal” (*Moravian Book of Worship*, hereafter *MBW*, 3).

¹⁰ See *CCM*, para. 2; “Meaning of Full Communion for Moravians,” as stated by the Southern Province at its 2002 Synod. See also the definition of full communion endorsed by the 2006 Synod of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church. Each of these statements may be found in the Appendix to this agreement.

¹¹ *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum (Moravian Church) 2002*, “The Ground of the Unity,” (hereafter *COUF*) para. 6.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum (Moravian Church) 2002*, “The Witness of the Unitas Fratrum,” para. 150.

122 6. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1886, as endorsed and modified by the Lambeth Conference of 1888,
123 is the foundation upon which The Episcopal Church seeks this relationship of full communion. The Chicago-
124 Lambeth Quadrilateral has been endorsed by numerous General Conventions of The Episcopal Church and
125 commended by several Lambeth Conferences of Bishops. There are four essential elements to the
126 Quadrilateral as affirmed by the Lambeth Conference of 1888: 1) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New
127 Testaments as the revealed Word of God; 2) The Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian
128 Faith; 3) The two Sacraments,—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord,—ministered with unflinching use of
129 Christ’s words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him; 4) The Historic Episcopate, locally
130 adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God
131 into the unity of His Church.¹⁴

132
133 We see the Moravian Church and The Episcopal Church as being led together toward the unity our Lord
134 enjoins for the sake of furthering Christ’s mission. This agreement is a step towards fulfilling that promise.
135

136 7. The Episcopal Church and the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Church commend “The
137 Ground of the Unity” and the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral as the sources which inform our two churches’
138 journey towards full communion. We seek not only to recognize our ministers, but to work together in the
139 mission of God (*mission Dei*). We are striving to carry out this *mission dei* in a closer partnership. As a means of
140 doing this, we also seek ways to allow for the interchangeability of our ordained ministries as well as ordained
141 ministers.¹⁵

142
143 **III. Foundational Principles**

144 We now seek to state our agreement on how oversight is expressed in both of our churches and the ministry of
145 bishops/historic episcopate, locally adapted.
146

147 8. We understand the ministry of oversight to be the way our churches delegate the good ordering of the church
148 to representative bodies as well as to certain individuals called and commissioned to a ministry of oversight in
149 a collegial fashion. In both of our churches, oversight is expressed collegially through a variety of mutually
150 complementary bodies.
151

152 9. Each of our churches is part of a global communion. Member churches of the Anglican Communion are
153 autonomous provinces governed by representative synods which include clergy and laity.¹⁶ Individual
154 provinces of the Unitas Fratrum are governed by representative synods which include clergy and laity, and are
155 also part of a single, worldwide church governed by a Unity Synod which includes clergy and lay
156 representative from the provinces.
157

158 10. In addition, between Provincial Synods and General Conventions, regular oversight of the church is provided
159 by an elected, representative body or bodies which consist of clergy and laity. In the Northern and Southern
160 Provinces, oversight is provided by a Provincial Elders’ Conference (hereafter abbreviated PEC). In the
161 Northern Province, the PEC is comprised of four clergy and four lay persons; in the Southern Province,
162 three clergy and two lay persons. The PECs and the President of the PEC are elected by provincial synods.
163

¹⁴ BCP, 877–878.

¹⁵ On this path towards a reconciled ministry, for Episcopalians this agreement affirms that the two churches are in complete agreement on the first three points of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. In the respective Resolutions on Interim Eucharistic Sharing, each church declared that: “We recognize in one another the faith of the one, holy, catholic, apostolic, and undivided church as it is witnessed in the Moravian Church in America in the *Moravian Book of Worship*, ‘The Ground of the Unity,’ the *Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, and the *Books of Order* of the Northern and Southern Provinces and the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Constitution and Canons* of The Episcopal Church.” In the same Resolution establishing Interim Eucharistic Sharing both churches also affirmed the doctrinal statement produced by the Church of England-Moravian Church dialogues, which may be found in the Appendices.

¹⁶ See the Preamble to the Constitution of The Episcopal Church: “The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, otherwise known as The Episcopal Church (which name is hereby recognized as also designating the Church), is a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, of those duly constituted Dioceses, Provinces, and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury, upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.”

- 164 11. In The Episcopal Church, between meetings of General Convention, oversight is provided by an Executive
165 Council, the Presiding Bishop, and relevant Commissions, Committees, Agencies, and Boards. On the
166 diocesan level, each diocese holds a diocesan convention once a year for the purpose of managing its affairs.
167 Each diocese also has a Standing Committee consisting of clergy and lay representation, elected at diocesan
168 convention. The Standing Committee works in conjunction with the diocesan bishop in providing oversight
169 for the diocese.
170
- 171 12. At the parish level, Episcopal congregations are governed by a rector and Vestry. The Vestry consists of lay
172 members elected at an annual meeting and shares in the oversight of all aspects of congregational life with the
173 rector. Most Moravian congregations have a Board of Elders, chaired by the pastor, which oversees the
174 spiritual affairs of the congregation and a Board of Trustees which oversees and directs the financial affairs
175 and cares for the church property.
176
- 177 13. Furthermore, each of our churches has bishops ordained in an historic succession. There are similarities in
178 the way bishops function in our two churches: bishops ordain candidates for the ministry¹⁷ and have
179 particular aspects of pastoral responsibility. There are also differences. In the Moravian Church, bishops are
180 primarily pastoral and consultative. They do not function in administrative oversight by virtue of their
181 Episcopal office, but may be elected to an administrative office of oversight (such as the PEC). In The
182 Episcopal Church and the Anglican tradition, bishops exercise pastoral and administrative oversight. We do
183 not see these differences as mutually exclusive—rather as mutually complementary.
184
- 185 14. Thus oversight in both of our churches is exercised in a confederal and collegial fashion, with clergy and
186 laity sharing in the governance of the church at all levels, from the local to the provincial. In addition, all
187 persons in our churches, lay and ordained, are called in baptism to engage in God’s mission through ministry.
188 The following paragraphs summarize our agreed understanding of the ministry of lay persons, deacons,
189 presbyters, and bishops.
190
- 191 15. Ordained Ministry and the Whole People of God. All members of Christ’s church are commissioned for
192 ministry through baptism.¹⁸ Both churches understand the ministers of the church to be lay persons, bishops,
193 presbyters/priests, and deacons.¹⁹ The ministry of the ordained is an expression of the ministry of the whole
194 people of God and a response to the call and gifts of Christ who is Chief Elder of the Church and its
195 ministry.²⁰ However, in order to further the mission and witness of the Church, God calls forth in the church
196 particular ministries of persons to serve the people through proclamation of the Word and administration of
197 the sacraments.²¹ Within the priesthood of the whole Church, the ministry of the ordained is an appointed
198 means through which Christ makes his priesthood present and effective to his people.²² The threefold pattern
199 of deacon, presbyter, and bishop has been in existence since the first century.²³ The threefold ministry is a gift
200 from God for the nurture of God’s people and for the proclamation, witness, and spread of the Gospel
201 everywhere.²⁴ These differing forms of ministry complement one another and must be seen in relation to one
202 another within the context of the ministry of the whole people of God.²⁵ Each of these ministries is
203 expressed in personal, collegial, and communal manners. They are personal in that each is exercised by a
204 person who has been baptized and ordained. They are collegial in that baptism and ordination alike associate

¹⁷ In the Moravian Church, bishops ordain candidates at the request of the PEC. In The Episcopal Church, the Standing Committee of the diocese must also approve ordinations of deacon and priests.

¹⁸ *CCM*, para. 6; *MBW*, 165; *Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion* (the ELCA-Moravian full communion agreement), para. 38; see also *COUF*, para. 682.

¹⁹ “An Outline of the Faith, Commonly Called the Catechism,” *BCP*, 855.

²⁰ *COUF*, para. 682

²¹ *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting* (hereafter *Consensus*), Chapter 7, para. 30, which is a paraphrase of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (hereafter *BEM*), p. M13 and its commentary.

²² *The Fetter Lane Common Statement: Towards Visible Unity between the Church of England and the Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland* (hereafter *Fetter Lane*), p. 29, as found in *Anglican-Moravian Conversations: The Fetter Lane Common Statement with Essays in Anglican and Moravian History* (London: Council for Christian Unity, 1996), 21.

²³ *BEM*, para. M19.

²⁴ *BCP*, 510.

²⁵ *Consensus*, Chapter 7, para. 21; see also *BEM*, para. M5–M6.

205 the individual with others who share the same call. Each is communal in that each is rooted in the life of the
206 worshipping and witnessing congregation and that ministry is exercised with the cooperation of the whole
207 community.²⁶
208

209 16. *Ministry of lay persons.* Through Baptism, lay persons are called into the ministry of Jesus Christ and therefore at
210 the same time into a relationship with other Christians.²⁷ They are called to bear witness to Christ wherever
211 they may be, and, according to the gifts given to them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the
212 world. They are to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church.²⁸ Lay persons who are
213 subsequently ordained continue to bear responsibility for the ministry common to all Christians to which they
214 were called at Baptism.²⁹
215

216 17. *Ministry of deacons.* By struggling in Christ's name with the myriad needs of societies and persons, deacons
217 exemplify the interdependence of worship and service in the Church's life.³⁰ Deacons are ordained to a
218 ministry of service and servanthood.³¹ Deacons are to interpret to the church the needs, concerns, and hopes
219 of the world through a special ministry of servanthood.³² The deacon is understood to be an icon of Christ's
220 own servant ministry and to make Christ's redemptive love known, by word and example, in both the church
221 and the world.³³
222

223 Both churches have retained the ancient practice of first ordaining as deacons those called to serve as
224 presbyters. However we acknowledge that there are differences in how each church has chosen to interpret
225 the diaconate. In The Episcopal Church, deacons are ordained to a ministry of Word and Service. After a
226 duration of normally between six months to one year, those persons called to the presbyterate are so
227 ordained.³⁴ For the Moravian Church, the intention of the ordination rite is to ordain deacons to a ministry of
228 word and sacrament.³⁵ One serves as a deacon for several years before being approved for consecration as a
229 presbyter.³⁶ For both churches, this is considered a time of practical training for those also called to
230 presbyteral ministry. In addition, The Episcopal Church ordains persons as deacons not called to presbyteral
231 ministry. There is no equivalent to this in the Moravian Church.
232

233 18. *Ministry of presbyters/priests.* Presbyters serve as pastoral ministers of word and sacraments in a local Eucharistic
234 community.³⁷ Presbyters are called to work as pastors and teachers in a collegial fashion with other presbyters,
235 with deacons, and with their bishops.³⁸ They also bear responsibility for other pastoral acts of the Church
236 such as preparing persons for confirmation and marriage, declaring forgiveness of sin, and pronouncing
237 God's blessing. Mission is a responsibility of all who share the ministry of Christ. In the context of this
238 overall mission of the church, presbyters, accordingly, are called to leadership in mission. As evangelists they
239 proclaim the gospel, teach God's purposes, and share their personal faith. They bear witness to God's work in

²⁶ *Consensus*, Chapter 7, para. 22.a–c; based on *BEM*, para. M26. Both The Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church in America, Northern and Southern Provinces, have accepted and issued formal responses to *BEM*. The Episcopal Church has specifically commended it as a resource for ecumenical discussions (see Resolution A061 from the 1985 General Convention), and the Moravian Church–Northern Province, issued its formal endorsement of *BEM* in the 6th Partial Report of the Committee on Ecumenical Affairs and Faith and Order of the 1986 Provincial Synod. The 1986 Southern Province Synod affirmed the response to *BEM* given by the PEC of the Southern Province.

²⁷ *Consensus*, Chapter 7, para. 24.

²⁸ *BCP*, 855.

²⁹ *Consensus*, Chapter 7, para. 24.

³⁰ *BEM*, M31.

³¹ *Book of Order*, Moravian Church–Northern Province, para. 204 (f).

³² *BCP*, 543; *COUF*, para. 684.

³³ *BCP*, 543.

³⁴ *Constitution and Canons, Together with the Rules of Order for the Government of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America Otherwise Known as The Episcopal Church* (2006) (hereafter *Constitution and Canons*), Title III, Canon 9, Sec. 7.

³⁵ See the rite for the Ordination of a Deacon, Moravian Church, Supplemental Liturgies, S-2, S-4, and S-7. In the ancient *Unitas Fratrum*, deacons served primarily as assistants to the bishop and did not have sacramental functions. With the renewal of the church in 18th-century Germany, the influence of Count Zinzendorf and the state Lutheran Church led to the adaptation of the office of deacon to include sacramental functions.

³⁶ *COUF*, para. 868; Moravian Church–Southern Province, *Book of Order*, para. 802; Northern Province, *Book of Order*, para. 205(a).

³⁷ *Fetter Lane*, para. 33; *BEM*, para. M30; Moravian Church, Supplemental Liturgies, Consecration of a Presbyter, S-14.

³⁸ *BCP*, 531.

240 the world as well as in the Church. They lead the Church in calling persons to faith in Jesus Christ and in
241 establishing congregations. As ministers of word and sacraments, they pioneer in new forms of mission. They
242 enlist, renew, equip, and accompany God’s People as they go out into the local community, the nation, and
243 the world.³⁹ In addition, presbyters serve in a variety of specialized ministries where they exercise their
244 pastoral ministry. These include hospital and military chaplains, service in denominational agencies and
245 boards, and in other ecumenical settings.

246
247 19. *Ministry of bishops.* Bishops represent Christ and his Church; guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the whole
248 Church; proclaim the Word of God; and act in Christ’s name for the reconciliation of the world and the
249 building up of the church; and ordain others to continue Christ’s ministry.⁴⁰ They have pastoral
250 responsibilities in the area to which they are called.⁴¹ They are to be the chief pastors in their area of oversight
251 and have particular responsibilities in matters of faith and doctrine.⁴² Bishops in The Episcopal Church are
252 elected by a diocese and exercise oversight of a specific area.⁴³ Bishops in the Moravian Church are also
253 elected by representative assemblies of a specific geographic area, namely, a particular province as a whole,
254 but are also available as bishops of the entire *Unitas Fratrum*.⁴⁴ Bishops exercise oversight in conjunction
255 with lay persons, deacons, and presbyters. In The Episcopal Church, this is through Standing Committees,
256 diocesan conventions, Vestries, and General Convention; and in the Moravian Church through the Provincial
257 Elders’ Conference, Provincial Synods, and congregational Boards of Elders. Bishops preside at the
258 ordination (and consecration) of deacons and the ordination and consecration of presbyters,⁴⁵ and with other
259 bishops participate in the consecration of new bishops.⁴⁶

260
261 **IV. Ministry of Bishops**

262 20. As a means to deepen our joint mission and witness, to allow for an interchangeability of ordained ministers,
263 and as a symbol of overcoming the scandal of our division, we seek to reconcile our Episcopal ministries. In
264 the *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum* the Moravian Church has recognized the office of bishop as representing
265 “the vital unity of the church and the continuity of the church’s ministry.”⁴⁷ The Chicago-Lambeth
266 Quadrilateral outlines four elements of the “substantial deposit of Christian Faith and Order” considered
267 integral to the visible unity of Christ’s church. The fourth of these is the “Historic Episcopate, locally adapted
268 in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the
269 unity of His Church.”⁴⁸

270
271 We jointly affirm the following understandings of the office of bishop as locally adapted by our churches:

272
273 21. We affirm that a component of the ministry of bishops is the exercise of oversight in conjunction with clergy
274 and lay persons, as described in paragraphs 8–14 and 19 above. This nature and form of this oversight is
275 exercised in different ways in our churches.
276

³⁹ The description of presbyters in this paragraph is drawn from *Consensus*, Chapter 7, para. 56. In addition, all the functions of presbyters described in this paragraph may be exercised by deacons in the Moravian Church.

⁴⁰ *BCP*, 855.

⁴¹ *BEM*, para. M29.

⁴² *BCP*, 517; *COUF*, para. 688.

⁴³ Diocesan and suffragan bishops are elected by dioceses which cover specific geographic areas. The House of Bishops collectively may elect bishops for certain specific areas of oversight, such as overseas missionary dioceses, and elects a bishop with jurisdiction over chaplains in federal institutions such as Veterans’ Administration, the Armed Forces, and prison chaplains.

⁴⁴ Under certain circumstances the Unity Synod, the governing body of the worldwide Moravian Church, may elect bishops for individual provinces. See *COUF*, para. 260.

⁴⁵ In The Episcopal Church, the terms “ordain” and “consecrate” are used in reference to all three orders of ministry in the ordination rites. In the Moravian Church’s ordination rites, ordination is used in reference to deacons, but only consecration is used with reference to presbyters and bishops.

⁴⁶ In The Episcopal Church, this number is at least three, following ancient practice established by the Canons of the Council of Nicaea. In the Moravian Church, this number is at least two; see *COUF*, para. 689.

⁴⁷ *COUF*, 687.

⁴⁸ *BCP*, 877.

- 277 22. We affirm the value of the office of bishop as a sign, but not a guarantee, of the succession of the apostolic
278 faith of the church as a whole.⁴⁹ We hold that the office of bishop is a visible and personal way of focusing
279 the apostolicity of the whole Church.⁵⁰
280
- 281 23. We affirm that The Episcopal Church demonstrated its intent to maintain the office of bishop through the
282 actions of state conventions, clergy associations, and the first General Conventions. Priests were elected by
283 representative bodies to exercise ministries of oversight and to serve as chief pastors and missionaries in
284 designated geographic areas. The Episcopal Church further demonstrated its intent to maintain the office of
285 bishop when these individuals sought and received consecration through prayer and the laying-on of hands
286 by bishops from The Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of England.
287
- 288 24. We affirm that the Moravian Church has also demonstrated its intent to maintain the office of bishop. To
289 further the cause of the necessary reform of the Church, in 1467 the first members of the Unitas Fratrum
290 elected persons from among themselves to receive Episcopal consecration. It is not possible today to
291 determine the source of this consecration, once attributed to a Waldensian bishop.⁵¹ We honor the Moravian
292 Church's valiant actions to continue the succession in the office of bishop in the ancient Unitas Fratrum
293 despite extensive persecution, and in the renewal of the office of bishop for the sake of the mission of
294 church.
295
- 296 25. We affirm the intent of the Moravian Church to continue to ordain in this succession with the rebirth of the
297 modern Moravian Church in 1722, after the near extermination of the ancient Unitas Fratrum in the
298 aftermath of severe persecution following the Thirty Years' War. One of the last remaining bishops of the
299 ancient Unitas Fratrum consecrated new bishops for the Moravian Church in order more effectively to carry
300 out its newly begun work in the field of global missions.
301
- 302 26. The renewed Moravian Church received the episcopate as an inheritance from the ancient Unitas Fratrum
303 although it regards the episcopate in the renewed Unity in a different way from that of the ancient Unity.
304 Formerly, a bishop had a governmental and administrative function in the church. Today, however, this
305 function is not linked to the Episcopal office. Moravians, along with other Christians, hold to the
306 understanding, common to both the ancient and renewed Unity that Christ is head of the Church and
307 pastoral oversight is exercised in responsibility to him. This has received particular emphasis since the action
308 taken in 1741 to recognize Christ as Chief Elder of the Moravian Church.⁵² A bishop of the Moravian Church
309 is consecrated to a special priestly, pastoral ministry in the name of and for the whole Unity. In the Moravian
310 Church the office of bishop represents the vital unity of the church and the continuity of the church's
311 ministry.⁵³
312
- 313 27. We affirm the local adaptation of the ministry of bishops through the tremendous faithfulness that the
314 Moravian Church has demonstrated in maintaining a succession of bishops which they had originally
315 understood to be of apostolic origin.

⁴⁹ See *CCM*, para. 12; *BEM*, para. M38; see also *COUF*, para. 687; see *Fetter Lane*, para. 42–45.

⁵⁰ *Porvoo Common Statement*, para. 46. The Porvoo Statement established full, visible unity between the Church of England, Church of Ireland, the Scottish Episcopal Church, and the Church of Wales with the Church of Sweden, the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Church of Norway, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

⁵¹ For a discussion of the Unitas Fratrum's belief that they received their episcopate from a Waldensian elder, who in turn was understood as having preserved a "pure" succession dating from the pre-Constantinian Church, see Edwin Sawyer, "The Waldensian Influence on the Moravian Church," *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society*, Volume 25 (1988), 47–61. See also Thomas Ferguson, "The Moravian Episcopate and The Episcopal Church," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 71:4 (2002), 498–518; Colin Podmore, "The Moravian Episcopate and The Episcopal Church: A Personal Response," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 72:3 (2003), 351–384; Thomas Ferguson, "A Reply to Colin Podmore," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 72:3 (2003), 385–390.

⁵² For several decades following the 1722 renewal, the Moravian Church did have a Chief Elder who exercised oversight over the whole Unitas Fratrum. However upon the resignation of Leonard Dober as Chief Elder in 1741, the Moravian Synod was unable to agree upon a successor. After prayer and discernment, the Moravian Church chose to recognize Christ alone as Chief Elder and this decision was affirmed by the lot which the Moravians often used in discerning the Savior's will in decision making. Thereafter no single individual would govern the Moravian Church, but all authority flowed from Christ, the Chief Elder. November 13, 1741, is kept as a festival on the liturgical calendar of the Unitas Fratrum as a celebration of the Chief Eldership of Christ.

⁵³ *COUF*, para. 687.

316

317 28. We also affirm the local adaptation of the historic episcopate by The Episcopal Church. Bishops in The
318 Episcopal Church are elected by representative bodies; they exercise oversight in conjunction with other
319 bishops, clergy, and lay persons, function collegially in a House of Bishops which meets regularly, and elect a
320 Presiding Bishop as Chief Pastor and Primate but with no jurisdictional authority. Though many of these
321 elements have been adopted by other provinces of the Anglican Communion, at their origin they were
322 innovative adaptations of the Anglican historic episcopate for the needs and concerns of the nascent
323 Episcopal Church.

324

325 29. Our two churches are already exploring areas of common mission, worship, and witness on local, national,
326 and global levels. We believe that sharing in ministry of bishops is one of several ways to deepen areas of
327 joint mission and witness, and to facilitate more visible expressions of the unity to which we are called. Our
328 two churches affirm that we understand that each church has locally adapted the historic episcopate for the
329 sake of mission in each of our churches.

330

331 **V. Reconciliation of Ordained Ministries**

332 a) *Actions of Both Churches*

333

334 30. Receiving the gifts of Episcopal ministries. Both churches pledge to receive the gifts of one another in regard
335 to the ministry of bishops. The Episcopal Church therefore pledges to receive the gift of the Moravian
336 Church's understanding that the bishop is consecrated to a special pastoral ministry in the area to which he or
337 she exercises oversight. The Episcopal Church recognizes that the Moravian Church, through its emphasis on
338 the bishop as being a pastor of pastors (*pastor pastorum*), has a special gift to offer in this relationship of full
339 communion. We believe that this Moravian emphasis may well strengthen the historic association of the
340 bishop as chief pastor in the Anglican tradition.⁵⁴ The Moravian Church in America acknowledges that The
341 Episcopal Church has sought to maintain a succession of apostolic faith and historic episcopate which the
342 Moravian Church has deemed important in the establishment and continuation of its own ministry. Both of
343 our churches recognize that sharing in Episcopal ministries is a sign of the greater unity of the church for
344 which we all pray.

345

346 31. The Episcopal Church recognizes that bishops in the Moravian Church are consecrated to a special priestly,
347 pastoral ministry. The Episcopal Church acknowledges that the understanding of the office of bishop in the
348 Moravian Church in America falls within the parameters of the historic episcopate, locally adapted. The
349 Moravian Church recognizes that Episcopal bishops are consecrated to a special ministry of oversight which
350 includes pastoral oversight but also other additional elements which are exercised in the Moravian Church in
351 different ways.⁵⁵

352

353 32. The pattern of sharing in the Episcopal ministry will take the following form. At the inaugural celebration of
354 this full communion agreement, there will be a liturgical ceremony. Members of the PECs of the Northern
355 and Southern Province, the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, and the President of the House of
356 Deputies of the General Convention, as representatives of bodies which provide oversight in our churches,
357 will attend and divide the duties of presiding among them as appropriate. This celebration will involve lay
358 persons, deacons, presbyters, and bishops, and will be planned by a joint liturgical commission appointed by
359 the relevant decision-making bodies in both churches. This ceremony will include bishops in good standing
360 of the Northern Province, the Southern Province, the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, Episcopal
361 bishops drawn from dioceses with Moravian congregations located within them, and one bishop from each
362 province of The Episcopal Church. Because both of our churches are in full communion with the Evangelical

⁵⁴ As expressed in *BCP*, 518, 855. For a description of the role of bishops in the Moravian Church, see *COUF*, para. 687: "A bishop has responsibility primarily for providing pastoral care to pastors and the Church."

⁵⁵ For example, by the Provincial Elders' Conferences which are elected boards of laity and clergy that administer each province of the *Unitas Fratrum*.

363 Lutheran Church in America, bishops of the ELCA, including the Presiding Bishop, will be invited and may
364 participate as they are able. Bishops from other provinces of the Unitas Fratrum and Anglican Communion
365 will be invited to participate in this ecumenical event as a sign of the relationship between The Episcopal
366 Church and the Moravian Church as provinces of global communions.

367
368 As part of this ceremony, the two churches will reconcile Episcopal ministries as a means to reconcile our
369 ordained ministries. Each church will use liturgical symbols and actions appropriate in each communion.

370 i. At an appropriate time in the liturgy, Episcopal bishops will kneel before Moravian bishops. The
371 Moravian bishops will lay hands on them and pray, “Eternal God, with thanksgiving we
372 acknowledge the ministry these servants have already received and exercised, and we ask you
373 through your Holy Spirit to bestow upon them the grace and authority as understood and
374 required by this church for the exercise of the ministry of a bishop, for the sake of the unity of
375 the church, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
376 one God, forever. Amen.” The Moravian bishops then will lay hands on the Episcopal bishops
377 and pray the Aaronic blessing: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to
378 shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you
379 peace. In the name of Jesus, Amen.” The Episcopal bishops will then stand, and the Moravian
380 bishops will offer them the right hand of fellowship. This liturgical symbol is distinct from the
381 passing of the peace. In the tradition of the Moravian Church, clergy from other denominations
382 are welcomed into ministerial fellowship through the Aaronic blessing and the right hand of
383 fellowship. Through these actions, Episcopal bishops present will be understood to have been
384 welcomed into fellowship with those who sustained a witness of unity and fidelity to the gospel
385 since 1457 as the Unitas Fratrum.

386 ii. The Moravian bishops will kneel before the Episcopal bishops. The Episcopal bishops will lay
387 hands on the Moravian bishops and pray, “Eternal God, with thanksgiving we acknowledge the
388 ministry these servants have already received and exercised, and we ask you through your Holy
389 Spirit to bestow upon them the grace and authority as understood and required by this church
390 for the exercise of the ministry of a bishop, for the sake of the unity of the church, through Jesus
391 Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.”
392 They will then lay hands on the Moravian bishops and pray the Aaronic blessing: “The Lord
393 bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the
394 Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. In the name of Jesus, Amen.” The
395 peace will then be exchanged. Through these actions the Moravian bishops present will be
396 understood to have been incorporated into the historic episcopate, as understood by The
397 Episcopal Church, for the sake of full communion.

399 33. Following this inaugural ceremony, in order to provide for a visible expression of the unity our two churches
400 have now received in full communion, and to strengthen mission and witness in areas of the Moravian
401 Church where full communion will have the greatest impact:

402
403 *In The Episcopal Church*, at least one Moravian bishop will be present and participate in the laying-on of
404 hands at the consecrations of bishops for Episcopal dioceses in the states of North Carolina,
405 Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, areas with the greatest concentrations of both Moravians and
406 Episcopalians.

407
408 *In the Moravian Church*. At all consecrations of Moravian bishops, at least one bishop of The Episcopal
409 Church will be present and participate in the laying-on of hands.

410
411 Bishops of the ELCA will also be invited as a sign of our mutual full communion relationship.

412
413 b) *Ministry of Presbyters: Actions of The Episcopal Church.*

414 34. In this present document, our two churches recognize one another as belonging to the one, holy, Catholic,
415 and apostolic church and summarize our convergence on the apostolic faith. This document has summarized
416 significant convergence on the understanding of the office of presbyter. To further empower the full
417 communion that is coming into being by means of this agreement, The Episcopal Church now recognizes
418 and affirms the ministries of presbyters in the Moravian Church as fully interchangeable. In The Episcopal
419 Church, no persons are allowed to exercise the offices of bishop, priest, or deacon unless they have already
420 received such ordination with the laying-on of hands by bishops who are themselves duly qualified to confer
421 Holy Orders.⁵⁶ Following the inaugural liturgy of full communion, The Episcopal Church will consider
422 bishops in the Moravian Church as bishops duly qualified to confer Holy Orders. The purpose of this action
423 will be to permit the interchangeability and reciprocity of presbyters between the Moravian Church and The
424 Episcopal Church, without any further ordination or re-ordination or supplemental ordination whatsoever,
425 and will fulfill the provisions of the Preface to the Ordination Rites of the *Book of Common Prayer* and the
426 *Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church*. All current ordained Moravian ministers in good standing as of
427 the date of the full communion celebration will thus be considered clergy ordained by bishops in full
428 communion with The Episcopal Church and thus eligible to minister in The Episcopal Church.
429

430 c) *Ministry of Presbyters: Actions of the Moravian Church in America.*
431

432 35. The Northern Province of Moravian Church and the Southern Province of the Moravian Church recognize
433 the ministry of presbyters of The Episcopal Church as fully interchangeable. In practice, as a matter of its
434 ecumenical ecclesiology, the Moravian Church already recognizes ordaining authorities of other communities
435 as being duly qualified to ordain. Currently all ministers from other denominations who seek to be received
436 into the Moravian Church are received as deacons. In order to allow for interchangeability of ministries, it
437 pledges to request the international Unity Synod to amend 685 of the *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum* and
438 pledges subsequently to amend its own Books of Order to allow for presbyters of The Episcopal Church,
439 should they seek to be received into the Moravian Church to minister permanently, to be received as
440 presbyters following completion of the appropriate procedures.⁵⁷ This proposed change will not apply to
441 those seeking occasional service, but only to those who seek to minister permanently in the Moravian Church.
442

443 d) *The ministry of deacons.*
444

445 36. While acknowledging that there are differences in how our churches have applied the office of deacon, we do
446 not see these differences as church dividing, nor do we intend to diminish the Moravian Church's
447 understanding of the office of deacon as a minister of word and sacrament or The Episcopal Church's
448 understanding of the deacon as ordained to a ministry of word and service. As acknowledged in paragraph 17,
449 there are differences in how each church has chosen to interpret the diaconate. At this time, in the Moravian
450 Church, deacons are ordained to a ministry of Word and Sacrament and in process towards consecration as a
451 presbyter. In The Episcopal Church, deacons are ordained to a ministry of Word and Service and are either in
452 formation process towards the presbyterate or are vocational. As we enter into full communion, we are
453 learning from each other's approach to the diaconate, lifting up the Moravian emphasis on formation and the
454 Episcopal emphasis on service. As deacons in both Churches are called for specific ministries in their
455 tradition, and since there are no parallels to the vocational diaconate in the Moravian Church, deacons would
456 not be interchangeable.
457

458 **VI. Interchangeability of Clergy**

459 37. In this agreement, the two churches declare that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the
460 Christian faith although this does not require from either church acceptance of all doctrinal formulations of
461 the other. Ordained ministers serving in time-certain or temporary capacities (for example as supply clergy)

⁵⁶ BCP, 510.

⁵⁷ The Unity Synod is the governing body of the worldwide Unity of the Brethren. It meets once every seven years. The Unity Synod approves a Church Order for the Unitas Fratrum. Member provinces may not contradict this church order, thus the Northern and Southern Provinces must wait until the next Unity Synod in 2016 to amend its Books of Order.

462 will be expected to undergo the appropriate procedures of that church always respecting the internal
463 discipline of each church. For The Episcopal Church, such ministers will be expected to teach and act in a
464 manner that is consistent with the doctrine, discipline, and worship of The Episcopal Church.⁵⁸ For the
465 Moravian Church in America, such ministers will be expected to promise “obedience to the faith and order of
466 the Moravian Church as formulated under Scripture and the Holy Spirit by our Synods and constituted
467 authorities.”⁵⁹ Ordained ministers from either church seeking long-term ministry with primary responsibility
468 in the other will be expected to apply for clergy transfer and to agree to the installation vow or declaration of
469 conformity in the church to which she or he is applying to minister permanently.
470

471 **VII. Joint Commission**

472 38. To assist in joint planning for mission, both churches authorize the establishment of a joint commission, fully
473 accountable to the decision-making bodies of the two churches. Its purpose will be consultative, to facilitate
474 mutual support and advice as well as common decision making through appropriate channels in fundamental
475 matters that the churches may face together in the future. The joint commission will work with the
476 appropriate boards, committees, commissions, and staff of the two churches concerning such ecumenical,
477 doctrinal, pastoral, and liturgical matters as may arise, always subject to approval by the appropriate decision-
478 making bodies of the two churches.
479

480 **VIII. Wider Context**

481 39. Both churches agree that the historic episcopate can be locally adapted and reformed in the service of the
482 gospel. In this spirit they offer this Agreement and growth toward full communion for serious consideration
483 among the other churches of the Reformed tradition and to the greater church. In addition, both the
484 Moravian Church in America and The Episcopal Church are members of global communions, and they offer
485 the fruits of this dialogue to other conversations between Anglicans and Moravians worldwide, particularly to
486 the Anglican Church of Canada and to the Canadian District of the Moravian Church in America,⁶⁰ and to
487 other Moravian provinces where there are judicatories or provinces of The Episcopal Church, with the hope
488 that they too will be able to subscribe to this full communion agreement. Each church promises to issue no
489 official commentary on this text that has not been accepted by the joint commission as a legitimate
490 interpretation thereof.
491

492 **IX. Existing Relationships**

493 40. Each church agrees that the other church will continue to live in communion with all the churches with
494 which the latter is now in communion. We are especially grateful that both our churches are already in full
495 communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This agreement will mark the first time three
496 different churches have entered into full communion with one another based on separate full communion
497 documents. We welcome this as the occasion in which the church of the First (Hussite) Reformation and
498 churches which arose from the second Reformation have reconciled themselves on the path towards the
499 visible unity of the church. In addition, The Episcopal Church continues to be in communion with Provinces
500 of the Anglican Communion, with the Old Catholic Churches of Europe, with the united churches of the
501 Indian subcontinent, with the Mar Thoma Church, and with the Philippine Independent Church. The
502 Moravian Church in America, Northern and Southern Provinces, continues to be a constituent member of
503 the Unitas Fratrum. This agreement does not imply or inaugurate any automatic communion between the
504 Moravian Church in America and those churches with whom The Episcopal Church is in full communion,
505 including other provinces of the Anglican Communion, nor does this agreement imply or inaugurate any
506 automatic full communion between The Episcopal Church and any other provinces of the Unitas Fratrum
507 but does not preclude provinces of the Unitas Fratrum which overlap Episcopal dioceses from adopting this

⁵⁸ CCM, para. 22.

⁵⁹ Ordination of a Deacon, Supplemental Liturgies, S-5. A similar promise is part of the rites of Consecration of Presbyters.

⁶⁰ There are Moravian congregations in Canada which are structurally part of the Moravian Church in America–Northern Province. Thus passage of this Agreement would be effective for those congregations which are part of the Northern Province. Honduras, Alaska and the Eastern West Indies are separate provinces of the Unitas Fratrum while the dioceses of Alaska and the Virgin Islands are structurally part of The Episcopal Church.

508 agreement.

509

510 **X. Other Dialogues**

511 41. Both churches agree that each will continue to engage in dialogue with other churches and traditions. Both of
512 our churches are in dialogue with churches of the Reformed tradition, and we offer this Agreement in the
513 spirit of fellowship to those dialogues. Both churches agree to take each other and this agreement into
514 account at every stage in their dialogues with other churches and traditions. Where appropriate, both
515 churches will seek to engage in joint dialogues. On the basis of this Agreement, both churches pledge that
516 they will not enter into formal agreements with other churches and traditions without prior consultation with
517 each other. At the same time both churches pledge that they will not impede the development of
518 relationships and agreements with other churches and traditions with whom they have been in dialogue. Both
519 of our churches have regularly consulted with our common full communion partner, the Evangelical
520 Lutheran Church in America.

521

522 **XI. Conclusion**

523 42. We receive with thanksgiving the gift of unity which is already given in Christ.⁶¹ In the words of the Moravian
524 hymn, we give thanks:

525 What brought us together, what joined our hearts?

526 The pardon which Jesus, our High Priest, imparts;

527 'tis this which cements the disciples of Christ,

528 who are into one by the Spirit baptized.

529 Is this our high calling, harmonious to dwell,

530 and thus in sweet concert Christ's praises to tell,

531 in peace and blessed union our moments to spend

532 and live in communion with Jesus our Friend?

533 O Yes, having found in the Lord our delight

534 he is our chief object by day and by night;

535 this knits us together, no longer we roam;

536 we all have one Father, and heav'n is our home.⁶²

537

538 43. Repeatedly Christians have echoed the scriptural confession that the unity of the church is both Christ's
539 own work and his call to us. It is therefore our task as well as his gift. We must "make every effort to
540 maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). We pray that we may rely upon, and
541 willingly receive from one another, the gifts Christ gives through his Spirit "for building up the body of
542 Christ" in love (Ephesians 4:16).

543

544 44. We do not know to what new, recovered, or continuing tasks of mission this agreement will lead our
545 churches, but we give thanks to God for leading us to this point. We entrust ourselves to that leading in the
546 future, confident that our full communion will be a witness to the gift and goal already present in Christ,
547 "so that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28). Entering full communion and thus removing
548 limitations through mutual recognition of faith, sacraments, and ministries will bring new opportunities and
549 levels of shared evangelism, witness, and service. It is the gift of Christ that we are sent as he has been sent
550 (John 17:17-26), that our unity will be received and perceived as we participate together in the mission of
551 the Son in obedience to the Father through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

⁶¹ See *COUF*, para. 6.

⁶² *MBW*, 675. Text by Ludolph Ernst Schlicht (1744), tune *Confession*. Alt. tune 1982 Hymnal *Ljons*, e.g., Hymn 636.

XII. APPENDICES

THE MEANING OF FULL COMMUNION FOR MORAVIANS

552
553
554 *As adopted in the Fifth Partial and Final Report of the Mission with Our Ecumenical Partners Mission Team of the 2006 Synod*
555 *of the Moravian Church—Northern Province, June 19, 2006.*

556
557 **WHY WE PURSUE FULL COMMUNION**

558 In pursuing full communion with another church, Moravians are remaining faithful to Christ’s will for his church
559 and to our Moravian heritage:

- 560 ▪ On the night before he died, our Lord Jesus prayed “...that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in
561 me, and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” (John
562 17: 21 NRSV);
- 563 ▪ “We believe in and confess the unity of the Church, given in the one Lord Jesus Christ as God and
564 Savior. He died that he might unite the scattered children of God. As the living Lord and Shepherd, he is
565 leading his flock toward such unity.... It is the Lord’s will that Christendom should give evidence of and
566 seek unity in Him with zeal and love.”⁶³ “The Unitas Fratrum is committed to the unity of the children of
567 God as a reality created by God in Jesus Christ.”⁶⁴

568
569 When we can remove any perceived barriers between ourselves and another church, we live out our affirmations
570 about Christ’s Church.

571
572 **HOW WE PURSUE FULL COMMUNION**

573 When we mutually affirm a relationship of full communion with another church:

- 574 ▪ We recognize and value the gifts present in each other as part of the Body of Christ, and we will be
575 mutually enriched by sharing those gifts with each other.
- 576 ▪ We will cooperate in common ministries of evangelism, witness, and service.
- 577 ▪ We mutually recognize and respect each other as part of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church,
578 which affirms its faith through the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed.
- 579 ▪ We mutually recognize each other’s practice of the two sacraments ordained by Christ himself—Baptism
580 and the Lord’s Supper—thus allowing for joint worship, including the celebration of the Holy
581 Communion, and for the transfer of membership between churches as within each church.
- 582 ▪ We recognize the validity of the ministerial orders of the other church, allowing for the orderly
583 interchange of ordained ministers subject to the regulations of church order and practice of each church.
- 584 ▪ We commit ourselves to work toward removing all barriers between ourselves and those with whom we
585 are in full communion. We acknowledge that current differences in structure, doctrine, liturgy, and
586 positions on social and ethical issues may require each church to speak for itself at times. At the same
587 time, being in full communion, we shall be open to the encouragement and admonition of the other
588 church for the sake of the Gospel.

589
590 **THE MEANING OF FULL COMMUNION FOR MORAVIANS**

591 *Report A from the Christian Unity and Ecumenical Witness Ministry Group to the 2002 Synod of the Moravian Church—Southern*
592 *Province.*

- 593 1. In pursuing full communion with another church, Moravians are remaining faithful to Christ’s will for his
594 church and to our Moravian heritage:
- 595 a. On the night before he died, our Lord Jesus prayed in his “High Priestly Prayer,” that “they all may be
596 one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee...that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” (John
597 17:21)
- 598 b. In *The Ground of the Unity*, Section 6, “We believe in and confess the unity of the Church, given in the one
599 Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior. He died that He might unite the scattered children of God.... It is
600 the Lord’s will that Christendom should give evidence of and seek unity in Him with zeal and love.” And

⁶³ *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum*, “The Ground of the Unity,” §6.

⁶⁴ *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum*, “The Witness of the Unitas Fratrum,” §150.

- 601 in Section 150 of the *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum*, “The Unitas Fratrum is committed to the unity of
602 the children of God as a reality created by God in Jesus Christ.”
- 603 c. When we can remove any perceived barriers between ourselves and another church, we live out our
604 affirmations about Christ’s Church.
- 605
- 606 2. When we mutually affirm a relationship of full communion with another church:
- 607 a. We mutually recognize and respect each other as part of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church,
608 which affirms its faith through the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds of the church.
- 609 b. We mutually recognize each other’s practice of the dominical sacraments, thus allowing for joint worship,
610 Eucharistic fellowship, and exchangeability of members.
- 611 c. We recognize the validity of the ministerial orders of the other church, allowing for the orderly exchange
612 of ordained ministers subject to the regulations of church order and practice of each church.
- 613 d. We acknowledge our differences, recognizing the autonomy of each church regarding structure, doctrine,
614 liturgy, and positions on social and ethical issues. At the same time, being in full communion, we shall be
615 open to the encouragement and admonition of the other church for the sake of the Gospel.
- 616 e. We recognize and value the distinctive gifts present in each historic but separated part of the Body of
617 Christ, thus believing we have contributions, which we can make to each other.
- 618 f. We will cooperate in common Christian mission through full communion in faith, life, and witness.

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING INTERIM EUCHARISTIC SHARING

Approved by the 2003 General Convention of The Episcopal Church:

Resolved, the House of Deputies and the Synods of the Moravian Church in America (Northern and Southern Provinces) concurring, that the 74th General Convention meeting in Minneapolis, MN, July 30–August 8, 2003, authorize continuing dialogue with the Moravian Church in America (Northern and Southern Provinces) which may lead to a future proposal of Full Communion including interchangeability of clergy for ministry of Word and Sacrament. And be it further

Resolved, the House of Deputies and the synods of the Moravian Church in America (Northern and Southern Provinces) concurring, that the 74th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, meeting in Minneapolis, MN, July 30–August 8, 2003, establishes Interim Eucharistic Sharing between The Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church under the following guidelines:

1. Moravian Provincial Elders' Conferences and Episcopal diocesan authorities are hereby encouraged to authorize joint celebrations of the Eucharist.
2. An authorized liturgy of the host church must be used, with ordained ministers of both churches standing at the Communion Table for the Great Thanksgiving.
3. The Preacher may be from either church.

EXPLANATION

1. We welcome and rejoice in the substantial progress of the dialogue between The Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church in America (Northern and Southern Provinces), authorized in 1997 and meeting 1999–2002, and of the progress of the initial North Carolina Moravian-Episcopal dialogue, which met from 1994–1997. Similar progress has been made in other Moravian-Anglican dialogues, including the dialogue between the Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland and the Church of England that resulted in the Fetter Lane Declaration of May 19, 1995. We share the hope of the *Fetter Lane Declaration*: “We look forward to the day when full communion in faith and life for the sake of our common mission is recognized by our churches.”
2. We acknowledge with thanksgiving the dialogue between the Moravian Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America which resulted in a full communion agreement in 1999 on the basis of the document *Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion*.
3. We recognize in one another the faith of the one, holy, catholic, apostolic, and undivided church as it is witnessed in the Moravian Church in America in the *Moravian Book of Worship*, the *Ground of the Unity*, the *Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, and the *Books of Order* of the Northern and Southern Provinces and the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Constitution and Canons* of The Episcopal Church.

In addition we concur with the points of agreement in the *Fetter Lane Common Statement*:

“a. We accept the authority of and read the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Each church provides a lectionary, and in the course of the Church’s year appropriate Scriptures are read to mark the festivals and seasons.

“b. 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 Jesus of Nazareth is true God and true Man, and that God is one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

“c. We celebrate the apostolic faith in worship, and centrally in liturgical worship, which is both a celebration of salvation through Christ and a significant factor in forming the *consensus fidelium* (the common mind of the faithful). We rejoice at the extent of ‘our common tradition of spirituality, liturgy, and sacramental life,’ which has given us similar forms of worship, common texts, hymns, canticles, and prayers. We are influenced by a common liturgical renewal. We also rejoice at the variety of expressions shown in different cultural settings.

“d. Baptism is both God’s gift and our human response to that gift in repentance and faith. It is a sign of God’s gracious activity in the life of the person baptized. Baptism with water in the name of the Triune God is the sacrament of union with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, initiating the one baptized into the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Baptism is related not only to a momentary experience, but to life-long growth into Christ. Both our churches offer baptism to adults and infants and regard it as unrepeatable. Since we practice and value infant baptism, we also take seriously our catechetical task for the nurture of baptized children to mature commitment to Christ. The life of the Christian is necessarily one of continuing struggle yet also of continuing experience of grace. In both our traditions infant baptism is followed by a rite of confirmation, which includes invocation of the Triune God, renewal of the baptismal profession of faith and a prayer that through renewal of the grace of baptism the candidate may be strengthened now and for ever.

“e. We believe that the celebration of the Eucharist (or the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion) is the feast of the new covenant instituted by Jesus Christ in which we set forth his life, death, and resurrection and look for his coming in glory. In the Eucharist the risen Christ gives his body and blood under the visible signs of bread and wine to the Christian community. ‘In the action of the Eucharist Christ is truly present to share his risen life with us and unite us with himself in his self-offering to the Father, the one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice which he alone can offer and has offered once for all.’ In the Eucharist, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church experiences the love of God and the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ and proclaims his death and resurrection until he comes and brings his Kingdom to completion.

“f. We believe and proclaim the gospel, that in his great love God, through Christ, 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 merits...Both our traditions affirm that justification leads to “good works”; authentic faith issues in love’.

“g. We share a common hope in the final consummation of the Kingdom of God, and believe that in this eschatological perspective we are called to work now for the furtherance of justice and peace. Our life in the world and in the Church is governed by the obligations of the Kingdom. ‘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 centre for the unity of the whole human family.’

“h. We believe that the Church is constituted and sustained by the Triune God through God’s saving action in word and sacraments, and is not the creation of individual believers. 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, being at the same time a human organization, stands in constant need of reform and renewal.

“i. We believe that all members of the Church are called to participate in its apostolic mission. There are therefore various gifts of the Holy Spirit for the building up of the community and the fulfillment of its calling. 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.

“Both our churches have a threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter, and deacon and believe it to serve as an expression of the unity we seek and also a means of achieving it. Within this threefold ministry the bishop signifies and focuses the continuity and unity of the whole Church. Apostolic continuity and unity in both our churches is expressed in the consecration and ordination of bishops in succession. The ordination of other ministers in both our churches is always by a bishop, with the assent of the

community of the Church. Integrally linked with the Episcopal ordination is our common tradition that the bishop has a special pastoral care for the clergy as for the whole church.

“j. A ministry of oversight (*episcopate*) is a gift of God to the Church. In both our Churches it is exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways. It is necessary in order to witness and safeguard the unity and apostolicity of the Church. In both our traditions in the course of history the exact structure and distribution of oversight functions have varied.”

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We find this agreement sufficient to hereby establish a relationship of interim Eucharistic sharing.

4. We encourage development of common life throughout the Moravian and Episcopal Churches by such means as the following:
 - a. Mutual prayer and mutual support, including covenants and agreements at all levels;
 - b. Common study of the Holy Scriptures, the histories and theological traditions of each church, and the material prepared by the dialogue;
 - c. Joint programs of worship, religious education, theological discussion, mission, evangelism, and social action; and
 - d. Joint use of facilities.
5. This Resolution and experience of Interim Eucharistic Sharing will be communicated at regular intervals to the other Moravian provinces, to other churches of the Anglican Communion throughout the world, to other churches with whom this Church is in full communion, as well as to the ecumenical dialogues in which Moravians and Anglicans are engaged, in order that consultation may be fostered, similar experiences encouraged elsewhere, and already existing relationships of full communion strengthened.

¹⁷ Cf. *Anglican Lutheran International Conversations: the Report of the Conversations 1970–1972, authorized by the Lambeth Conference and the Lutheran World Federation* (London, 1973) (*Pullach*), paras. 23–25.

¹⁸ Cf. *Helsinki*, para. 31; *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (WCC Faith and Order Paper No. 111, 1982) (*BEM*), *Baptism*, paras. 17–23, *Eucharist* paras. 27–33, *Ministry*, paras. 41–44.

¹⁹ Cf. *BEM, Baptism*, para. 8.

²⁰ Cf. *BEM, Baptism*, para. 9.

²¹ Conversations between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches, *The Porvoo Common Statement* (CCU Occasional Paper No. 3, 1993) (*Porvoo*), para. 32(g).

²² Cf. *BEM, Baptism*, para. 9.

²³ Cf. *Porvoo*, para. 32(g).

²⁴ *God's Reign and Our Unity*, para. 65.

²⁵ Cf. *BEM, Eucharist*, para. 1.

²⁶ *Helsinki*, para. 20; cf. paras. 17–21.

²⁷ *God's Reign and Our Unity*, para. 18; cf. para. 43 and *Pullach*, para. 59.

²⁸ Cf. para. 21 above.

²⁹ Cf. *BEM, Ministry*, para. 7.

³⁰ Cf. *Helsinki*, paras. 32–43; *God's Reign and Our Unity*, paras. 91–97, *BEM, Ministry*, paras. 4 and 12.

³¹ Cf. *BEM, Ministry*, para. 22.

³² Cf. ‘The Office of Bishop in our Churches: Texts’, appended to this Common Statement.

RESOLUTION A074 ENDORSE THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT ON INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church adopt the
- 2 following statement as the foundation upon which it engages in interreligious dialogue; and be it further
- 3
- 4 *Resolved*, That this statement be commended to dioceses and congregations and shared with our ecumenical and
- 5 interreligious partners.

EXPLANATION

In 2003, the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations was officially charged with the Interreligious work of The Episcopal Church through Resolution D010. During the 2003-2006 triennium, the Commission drafted Resolution A056: On the Topic of Ecumenical Relations and Establishing a Basis for Interreligious Dialogue. This Resolution was submitted to the 2006 General Convention, approved by the House of Bishops, but did not reach the floor of the House of Deputies before adjournment. During the 2006-2009 triennium, the Interreligious Relations Subcommittee of the SCEIR worked to develop a more substantive theological statement to clarify the theological and historical rationale for The Episcopal Church's engagement with other religious traditions. The Rev. Daniel Appleyard served as chair, along with the Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, the Rt. Rev. Ted Gulick and Ms. Kate Ketcham. The Rev. Dr. Gwynne Guibord and Dr. Thomas Ferguson served as consultants and provided staff support. In addition, the Rev. Dr. Randy Lee and Dr. Michael Trice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's Division for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations participated in the Committee's work as full communion partners.

The SCEIR presents the following Statement on Interreligious Relations for consideration and endorsement at the 2009 General Convention. Further information, including a list of Frequently Asked Questions about the statement, may be found at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ecumenism>.

Official Text

I. Introduction

1. In the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, The Episcopal Church articulated the basis on which it participates in ecumenical conversations. In this statement we will articulate a similar rationale for The Episcopal Church's engagement in interfaith dialogue.
2. As we engage other religious traditions, our work must be grounded in thoughtful exploration of and reflection on the appropriate ways to profess Christianity in the context of other faith traditions. This document is an initial reflection on why we are participating in multi-religious relationships. It explores the contexts for doing so and seeks to discern the unique contribution of The Episcopal Church to such relationships. As Christians we celebrate and affirm our witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Colossians 1:15). We rejoice in our call to spread the good news of God's love and reconciliation through engaging in life-enhancing relationships with all of God's people.

II. Historical Context

3. The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion have had a long interest and involvement in interreligious matters, which have historically been addressed in the context of mission. Prominent Episcopalians were involved in the first World Parliament of Religions in 1893. The Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion were well represented at the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference, which was called to discuss cooperation in the global mission field and gave birth to the modern ecumenical movement. In the decades that followed, the Anglican Communion and The Episcopal Church were influenced by the important theologies of mission developed by John V. Taylor (Bishop of Winchester and General Secretary of the Church Mission Society) and Lesslie Newbigin (a minister of the Church of Scotland and later a Bishop in the Church of South India). In The Episcopal Church, thoughtful engagement with Native American culture has resulted in the establishment of significant missionary presence in certain areas.
4. The groundbreaking 1965 document from Vatican Council II, *Nostra Aetate (In Our Time)*, helped to inaugurate a new era of dialogue between Christians and those of other religions. In the Anglican Communion, the 1988 Lambeth Conference issued a major report commending dialogue with people of other faiths as part of Christian discipleship and mission. It also produced the first Anglican Communion document on dialogue with Abrahamic traditions, "Jews, Christians and Muslims: The Way of Dialogue." This document was recommended for study; and the Provinces were asked to

initiate talks wherever possible on a tripartite basis with both Jews and Muslims. Other important resources we have used here include “Generous Love: the Truth of the Gospel and the Call to Dialogue,” issued in 2008 by the Network for Interfaith Concerns (NIFCON) of the Anglican Communion; the Archbishop of Canterbury’s 2007 reply to “A Common Word,” an overture from Muslim scholars for dialogue with Christians; and “Relations with Other World Religions,” Section F of the 2008 Lambeth Conference Indaba Reflections.

5. The Episcopal Church’s primary participation in interreligious dialogue has taken several forms:
 - Ecumenical efforts with other Christians, through the Interfaith Relations Commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ. The 1999 Assembly of the National Council of Churches unanimously approved a policy statement giving a theological rationale for participating in interfaith dialogue.
 - International efforts through the Anglican Communion Office, including the Network for Interfaith Concerns.
 - Particular initiatives taken by the Presiding Bishop as primate and chief pastor of the church.
 - Task force initiatives, first the Presiding Bishop’s Advisory Committee on Interfaith Relations (through 1997) and then the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (from 1997-2003).
 - Diocesan, congregational and individual efforts in peace making and interreligious dialogue.
6. In addition, in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Episcopal Relief and Development funded the Interfaith Education Initiative, a three-year program in conjunction with the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations that surveyed the interfaith work of The Episcopal Church and developed educational resources for interfaith dialogue. This project culminated in a conference held at Washington National Cathedral in 2004, and in the publication of the “IEI Manual on Interfaith Dialogue.”
7. In 2003, the General Convention officially located oversight of the church’s interreligious work with the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, which was renamed the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (SCEIR).

III. Current Context

8. As the Indaba Reflections from Lambeth note, “The contexts within which the Church ministers around the world vary widely and the potential for interfaith dialogue will vary accordingly” (¶ 93). The following paragraphs are an attempt to note some of the ways in which our context informs our approach to interreligious relations.
9. Today the picture of the world we have to carry is of the earth seen from space. Borders and boundaries are fluid, easily fractured, and unstable. The peoples of the earth will either survive together or perish together. Paradoxically our entire world is, at the same time, housed inside the flat screens of computers that provide immediate access to almost anyone or anything at anytime, anywhere on the planet. Crises and conflicts that were once local matters and seemed to be none of our concern are now global. Social strife, political upheaval and violence—predominantly fueled by greed and/or religious fanaticism—are not distant from us.
10. In the United States, the naïve image of the world as a safe and stable place was shattered on September 11, 2001. Those killed in the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York came from many lands, prayed in many languages, called God by many names. They are a true microcosm of the shifting reality of who lives in the United States today, citizens and foreign nationals alike. For the first time in decades, people in the United States experienced what other people in other lands have experienced for generations: grief and loss following from an assault on their homeland, the devastation of their people, and the shattering of a sense of well being. Yet U.S. responses against the

perceived attackers have focused not only on the armies of Iraq and Afghanistan, but also on whole groups of people defined by their cultural and religious identities: Muslims and Arabs.

11. As Episcopalians, we recognize that our neighbors come from a variety of different beliefs and backgrounds, and we are unfamiliar with many of if not most of them. Christians continue to struggle to find common ground and mutual respect with Jews and Muslims who are fellow children of Abraham. Whether we intend to or not, we impact and are impacted in return--powerfully and profoundly--by each other's lives, cultures and beliefs. For each of us, the neighbor often seems to be the stranger, the traveler, the Other--no longer just the person living next door or down the street, but the one who Christ calls us to receive as a gift and to love as we would be loved ourselves.
12. In contemporary local and global contexts, The Episcopal Church faces crucial opportunities and challenges for developing new creative relationships with people of other religious heritages. Throughout the world, people of different faiths can be seen searching for compatible if not common ways toward justice, peace and sustainable life. Our theological and ecclesial heritage offers significant resources for participating in this global quest.

IV. Scripture, Reason and Tradition as Resources in Interreligious Dialogue

13. As part of the Anglican Communion, The Episcopal Church seeks to be a community living in obedience to the Word of God revealed through Scripture, and to identify the contemporary message of that Word through bringing the insights of tradition, reason, and experience to theological reflection on interfaith relations.

Scripture and Reason

14. We understand the Holy Scriptures to be inspired by the Holy Spirit of God and at the same time the work of human authors, editors, and compilers.. "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16) The Scriptures "contain all things necessary for salvation" (BCP, 513). In the Scriptures we discover the nature of God, by their witness to Jesus Christ, in their record of his teaching, and through their proclamation of the Good News of God's Reign for all people. We believe the Holy Spirit continues to guide us in our growing understanding of the Scriptures, which are always to be interpreted in the widest possible context of God's redeeming love for all people. Throughout our history, Episcopalians have wrestled with varying interpretations of the Scriptures. Such differences are to be expected and appreciated as a direct consequence of our dynamic relationship with the Word of God and our experience of faith over time.
15. Christianity's Holy Scriptures reveal to us both the invitation and the direction to engage with people of other faiths. In Genesis 1:26 we meet the loving God who created all people and all nations, and the awesome majesty of creation bids us humbly acknowledge that the fullness of God's intention is beyond the scope of our limited understanding; God's gracious love is not confined to the Christian community alone. Because of our faith in the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, we expect to meet God in our neighbor, whom God commands us to love as we love ourselves (Mark 12:29-31).
16. The sixteenth-century Anglican theologian Richard Hooker helped form our tradition of Scriptural interpretation. In his major work, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Hooker argued that the Holy Spirit requires the church to use Reason as well as the Bible in understanding God's will. For Hooker, the Scriptures reveal to us essential truths about God and ourselves that we cannot learn by any other means. But in other matters of human life, God expects us to use our minds in order to reason together and thus discover, through conversation, debate, and argument, the right way forward. This requires respect for the opinions of other people of good will.

17. This Biblically-based respect for the diversity of understandings that authentic, truth-seeking human beings have is essential for communal reasoning and faithful living. The revelation of God in Christ calls us therefore to participate in our relationship with God and one another in a manner that is at once faithful, loving, lively, and reasonable. This understanding has allowed Episcopalians to find our way as one body through various conflicts; and it continues to call us to reconciliation and repair today. It is not a unity of opinion or a sameness of vision that holds us together. Rather, it is the belief that we are called to walk together in Jesus' path of reconciliation not only through our love for the other, but also through our respect for the legitimacy of the reasoning of the other. Respect for reason empowers us to meet God's unfolding world as active participants in the building of the Kingdom and to greet God's diverse people with appropriate welcome and gracious hospitality.

Tradition

18. Tradition is also an important aspect of Anglican theological understanding. As Anglicans we have always understood ourselves to be in continuity with the Catholic faith reaching back to the ancient, patristic church; we therefore hold the church's tradition in high regard. Anglicans have used tradition to inform our common reasoning as the church responds to new challenges and developments, using accumulated wisdom to show how similar challenges have been met in the past. For example, the English Reformers allowed tradition to shape the reformation of the Christianity they had received. Similarly, the founders of The Episcopal Church also placed great emphasis in tradition by continuing important beliefs and practices of the Church of England, such as its liturgy and ministry, and adapting them to the new context of the American republic, as in the American revival of the ancient practice of electing bishops. Tradition informed and shaped how Anglicans in these contexts responded to new situations.
19. Traditionally The Episcopal Church encountered religious pluralism and engaged in interreligious relations in the context of the foreign mission field. In many cases this work was the product of dedicated missionaries called to spread the Gospel in faithfulness to the Great Commission. We are also aware that in many cases this work went hand in hand with American expansionism in a combination of mission and empire. We need no better example than the ship sent to the newly-conquered Philippines that carried William Howard Taft as appointed governor and Charles Henry Brent as missionary bishop. We are shaped by these traditions: we are inspired by the energy, engagement, and faithfulness to the Gospel exhibited in the Anglican missionary engagement. Yet we recognize the need to be aware of the socio-religious implications of mission.
20. In turn, we hope that these examples from our history will help to shape future interreligious relationships. We pray for the same energy, engagement, and faithfulness to the Gospel that the Anglican missionary traditions display. We hope that these traditions will in turn shape our future relationships as missional ones of dialogue and companionship. "Companions in Transformation," the official Global Mission vision statement adopted at the 2003 General Convention, emphasizes the importance of dialogue and companionship in engagement with other religious traditions.. We believe the theological principles articulated there are also part of creating new traditions in interreligious relations, informed in classic Anglican fashion by our past.
21. We believe that interfaith work will carry forth God's intention for His creation. It will provide us the opportunity to reflect the love of God we know through our redemption through the Incarnation of Christ; and it will provide us with the opportunity to build faithful communities that live out the majesty of God's will for the earth with more depth and in more forms than we currently experience within the limitations of our own rich faith community. And we believe that Episcopalians find our best resources in our historic understandings of Scripture, reason, and tradition to engage in this work of transformation.

V. Soteriology and Interreligious Relations

22. One of the most sensitive aspects of interreligious relations concerns any religion's claims to unique or exclusive authority or revelation, including such claims in Christian traditions and teachings. In different ways each faith tradition addresses the human search for meaning and for an answer to our shortcomings. Salvation relates to our achieving the full humanity intended by the Creator, and to our recognizing that our efforts toward this goal fail without the assistance of God. We are dependent on the grace of God--God's unconditional, undeserved love for those God has made. The source of salvation is God alone; and those who depend upon God will indeed be saved.
23. As Christians "we are saved by grace through faith, and this is not our own doing, but the gift of God, not the results of works so that no one may boast. For we are what God has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand to be our way of life" (Eph 2: 8-10). In various ways, language of salvation (soteriology) refers to a form of deliverance from sin and the finiteness of this life as we experience it, with all its hardships and joys. Confidence in salvation expresses our expectation that there lies something very different beyond, the values of which we can actually anticipate in this life; and we trust that God will lead us there.
24. When we state that Jesus is the "Way and the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6) and that "there is no other name under heaven for salvation" (Acts 4:12), we profess that salvation is provided through affiliation and spiritual incorporation with the life of Another, Jesus Christ. We are saying that what we cannot do on our own, God has done for us in Jesus, whose life knew no gap between the divine will and his own way of living. The response of history to this perfect life was to crucify it. Yet in that very act of destruction, Christians believe, God created the end of every imperfect life and rebirth into a life of grace through the power of the resurrected life of Jesus.
25. How might we deal with these faith claims as we engage with other faith traditions in dialogue? Our claim about Jesus as the Way need not discount the authentic nature of the claims of other faiths as ways to find salvation. As Christians we are not confined to saying Jesus is the Way only for those who believe. We are also willing to learn from other faith traditions such insights and understanding as can enrich our own salvation story. Learning such insight is a major purpose of dialogue.
26. Professing God's gift of salvation is not a matter of competing with other faith traditions, with the imperative of converting one another. It is, rather, an invitation to bring as a gift to one another our faith in the ultimate destination God intends for all of creation. . To the extent that our goal for proclaiming salvation is human unity through common striving for peace, justice, and economic well-being, we do well to avoid exclusionary speech. At the same time, to the extent that this proclamation addresses God's intention for human creation in and beyond this life, it falls on believers in every faith tradition to stand firm in how their tradition understands this process. Each tradition brings its own understanding of the goal of human life to the interreligious conversation. Christians bring their particular profession of confidence in God's intentions as they are seen in and through the Incarnation of God in Christ. As the bishops at Lambeth noted, "The purpose of dialogue is not compromise, but growth in trust and understanding of each other's faith and traditions. Effective and meaningful dialogue will only take place where there is gentleness, honesty and integrity. In all of this, we affirm that Christianity needs to be lived and presented as 'a way of life', rather than a static set of beliefs (89)."
27. Christians bring to the conversation Jesus on and beyond the Cross. We see the Cross as transformative for every faith tradition including Christianity itself. We present the Cross as the Christian symbol and act of self-emptying, humility, redemptive suffering, sacrificial self-giving, and unvanquished love. Jesus' death and resurrection frame the dialogue for us. Values such as reconciliation, peace-making, and forgiveness are what we bring to the discussion of salvation.

28. Our invitation in dialogue is to ask all religions to tell us where they embody such values and how they experience and understand what we call salvation. In identifying the Crucifixion as a foundation for dialogue on salvation, Christians must be the first to allow themselves to be engaged by the profound significance of the Cross. Only then can we invite others to meet us there to offer their symbols of salvation and the values they express, so that we can all see in one another's salvation stories the full intention of God to save.

VI. Mission and Evangelism

29. Another sensitive and important aspect of interreligious relations concerns how we as Christians are called to offer life abundant (John 10:10) and to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:16-20). Christianity (including Anglicanism) is an actively evangelical religion. As we consider mission and evangelism in a pluralistic, globalized world, we are mindful of our particular cultural contexts. We are aware that The Episcopal Church is an international church, with congregations in over sixteen different nations. We are also part of the larger Anglican Communion. We should always be mindful of how encounters with people of other faiths in the United States may have differences as well as similarities with encounters in different contexts outside the US. We seek to be informed by the experience and reflection of our sisters and brothers living among men and women of many religious traditions in many nations. We stand in solidarity with each other, each seeking in our own circumstances to be faithful to the gospel.
30. We have spoken in this statement of the need to love one's neighbor. We see that love taking a variety of forms. Commitment to justice and mutual respect is the paramount consideration for some, for whom the practice of Christian love is the most powerful witness to the truth of the Gospel. Others, while not denying the witness of faithful lives, believe that love demands the verbal proclamation of the Gospel and an open invitation to all people to be reconciled to God in Christ. Still others understand evangelization as our participation in God's transformation of human society. The love of God that Jesus expressed in presence, compassion, healing, and justice: this we are called to live in mission. The reconciliation that God offers a sinful and broken world in Jesus' death and resurrection: this is the hope we offer the world in mission. As we seek to respond to God's call to love our neighbor, we all must seek to avoid ways of interaction which do violence to the integrity of human persons and communities.
31. We look for a way forward in the theology of companionship, as articulated in *Companions in Transformation*. This statement, produced by the Standing Commission on World Mission, reflects important developments in The Episcopal Church's understanding of how we participate in global mission; it is currently in a process of reception and review by the Church. *Companions in Transformation* outlines different ways in which Episcopalians are called to engage in mission and witness, and we believe these ways are also important in the service of interreligious dialogue. *Companions* states that a church participating in God's mission may not be able to solve the anguish, violence, and injustice suffered by companion churches. Even so, simply being present in the place of fear, loss and isolation expresses the love of Christ. We seek to be in companionship with our interfaith partners as we present ourselves in a variety of ways:
- **Witness:** “You are witnesses of these things,” said Jesus to his disciples (Luke 24:48). Witness in word means sharing the story of what God has done with us in light of the story of what God has done in Christ Jesus. Such witness is a natural and inevitable fruit of life in Christ, and it is the heart of evangelism as a mission imperative. Sharing the story with those who have never heard it is a crucial gift. Sharing our story with others must be part of a dialogue in which we listen to the stories others share with us, whether from places of little faith or from other religious paths. The religious diversity of the 21st century, like that of the early centuries of Christianity, calls us to hold together the multiple tasks of listening, learning, and bearing witness to Christ.

- **Pilgrim:** Pilgrims grow in their knowledge of God, learning as much as they share, receiving as much as they give. The humility of this orientation and the eagerness to learn from companions nurtures deep and lasting relationships. The pilgrim motif opens the door to true mutuality, where, as the 1966 Anglican Congress said about partnership, “all are givers and all are receivers.”
 - **Servant:** Servanthood means that we listen to the stated needs of our companions and look for signs of God’s work in them. It means that we seek to meet Christ in all situations. For Episcopalians, authentic servanthood is a crucial counter to the assumptions we develop on the basis of our extraordinary access to the power of information, technology, and money. Servanthood is a key mark for our church as a whole, though it is sometimes perceived as a domineering church in a superpower nation.
 - **Prophet:** In companionship we often find our views of political, racial and economic relationships in the world challenged and transformed. Episcopalians in the 21st century are called to prophesy both to our own church and to the world church that the Body of Christ may be a mustard seed of God’s Jubilee in the world, working justice for the whole human family from all faiths.
 - **Ambassador:** In addition to witnessing in word and deed as ambassadors of Christ, in companionship with interfaith partners we are ambassadors of our own church. As Episcopalians in dialogue, we must be aware always that companions are experiencing the vision, faithfulness, and integrity of The Episcopal Church through our conversation, conduct, and life. The role of ambassador also entails a commitment to represent fairly the life of The Episcopal Church. We should not be hesitant in being Episcopalian Christians, just as our interreligious partners are not hesitant in being faithful Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Bahai, or other faiths, as we are in dialogue with each other.
 - **Host:** “Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet,” said Abraham to the three strangers who appeared at Mamre (Genesis 18:4). “Let it be to me according to your word,” said Mary to the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:38). God is not forcible but invites a response of hospitality. As we engage in interreligious dialogue, hospitality must be central in our response. Hospitality means that we listen to what our companions say, offer them opportunities to experience the breadth of our church, and care for one another. We are likewise called to be generous and hospitable with those whom God brings to us, always respecting the practices and customs of our partners.
 - **Sacrament:** As the body of Christ, the church is a sacrament of Christ, an outward and visible sign of Christ’s inward and spiritual grace. We are called to be signs of God’s mission to reconcile all people with one another and with God in Christ. The people and communities we meet are likewise sacramental signs of God’s global presence. This sacramental emphasis helps us to retain an incarnational focus on people, relationships, and community, where God truly lives and where the most lasting impacts are made.
32. We are called and committed to be in companionship and partnership in interreligious dialogue in these different ways. We believe that religions must stand together in solidarity with all who are suffering and witness to the dignity of every human being. In these ways, presence in mission becomes a courageous mode of peace-making in a violent world. With ecumenical and interfaith groups, initiatives to encourage contact and dialogue and to advocate for religious freedom are imperative for reconciliation amid today’s heightened tensions among religions. God is calling us to join hands with all, and to speak out when religious freedom is curtailed and when the social, environmental, economic, or political welfare of communities is damaged. We believe that authentic Christian witness and evangelism that serve God’s mission are compatible with authentic interreligious dialogue.
33. At the outset of this statement, we recalled that one hundred and twenty years ago in the Chicago Quadrilateral, The Episcopal Church formulated a definition of what it considered essential to engage in

ecumenical relations. Today Christianity lives and serves in a global setting in which all of God's human creation is challenged to find common ground for our mutual flourishing. Interreligious relations are vital to this. In seeking to articulate for this century the principles to be considered for authentic interreligious relations and dialogue, we offer three gifts from The Episcopal Church and the Anglican way:

- Our comprehensive way of thinking by which we balance Scripture, reason, and tradition in relationship building;
- Our belief system that centers on the Incarnation of God in Christ, and on the Crucified One who leads us to self-emptying, forgiveness, and reconciliation; and
- Our practice of focusing mission in terms of service, companionship, and partnership between people as demonstrative of God's embrace of human life.

34. These gifts are especially suited for our time. The late Martin Luther King, Jr., celebrated in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, foresaw a time when as one all human beings of every faith would have to learn to choose "a non-violent coexistence" over a "violent co-annihilation", and to seek community over chaos. Interreligious relations are no longer about competing faiths, but about mutual demonstrations of Love Incarnate. We close this statement encouraged by Dr King's word: "Love is the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality. This Hindu-Muslim-Christian-Jewish-Buddhist belief about human reality is beautifully summed up in the first Epistle of St John: 'Let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loves is born of God and knows God. The one who loves not does not know God, for God is love. If we love one another God dwells in us, and God's love is perfected in us.'"⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Martin Luther King, *Chaos or Community*, p. 181.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Nostra Aetate: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html.

“Jews, Christians, and Muslims: The Way of Dialogue”: http://nifcon.anglicancommunion.org/resources/documents/lam88_ap6.pdf.

“Generous Love: the Truth of the Gospel and the Call to Dialogue”: <http://nifcon.anglicancommunion.org/resources/documents/index.cfm>.

The Archbishop of Canterbury’s 2007 reply to “A Common Word”: www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/media/word/2/j/A_Common_Word_for_the_Common_Good.doc

Lambeth Indaba Reflections: <http://www.lambethconference.org/reflections/document.cfm>.

Companions in Transformation: <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/WorldMissionVisionStatement2003.pdf>

RESOLUTION A075 APPROVE PRESBYTERIAN-EPISCOPAL AGREEMENT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention adopt the following Agreement
- 2 between The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (USA), which has been approved by the 2008
- 3 General Assembly of the PCUSA, and commend it to dioceses and congregations; and be it further
- 4
- 5 *Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention authorize a second round of dialogue to address the issues specified in
- 6 this Agreement and report to the 77th General Convention on its progress.

EXPLANATION

The 2000 General Convention established a bilateral dialogue with the Presbyterian Church, USA. Further information about the work of this bilateral dialogue is outlined in the “Background” section of the following proposal. The SCEIR presents this agreement for consideration to the 2009 General Convention. This Agreement was approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in June of 2008.

OFFICIAL TEXT

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

1. We acknowledge one another’s churches as churches belonging to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church;
2. We acknowledge that in our churches the Word of God is authentically preached and the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist are duly administered;
3. We acknowledge one another’s ordained ministries as given by God and instruments of grace, and look forward to the time when the reconciliation of our churches makes possible the full interchangeability of ministers;
4. We acknowledge that personal and collegial oversight (*episcopate*) is embodied and exercised in our churches in a variety of forms, Episcopal and non-Episcopal, as a visible sign of the Church’s unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry.
5. We agree that authorized ministers of our churches may, subject to the regulations of the churches and within the limits of their competence, carry out the tasks of their own office in congregations of the other churches when requested and approved by the diocesan bishop and local presbytery;⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Because we do not yet have full reconciliation and interchangeability of ordained ministries, all authorization for these special opportunities must conform to the Book of Worship and Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and to the Book of Common Prayer and the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

6. We agree that The Episcopal Church will invite members of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to receive Holy Communion in their churches and the Presbyterian Church (USA) will invite members of The Episcopal Church to receive Holy Communion in their churches. We encourage the members of our churches to accept this Eucharistic hospitality and thus express their unity with each other in the one Body of Christ;
7. We agree to continue to dialogue in the areas such as diaconal ministries, historic episcopate, the office of elder, etc. that would lead to full reconciliation of our ministries and interchangeability of our ministers.
8. We encourage diocesan bishops and presbyteries to provide regular occasion for planning, discussing, resourcing for missional, educational and liturgical life together. In addition, to explore possibilities for new church development and redevelopment together.
9. We agree to develop a process to support and implement the above recommendations⁶⁷
10. We affirm these proposals mark an important step in moving toward the full, visible unity of the Church. We know that beyond this commitment lies a move from the recognition to the reconciliation of churches and ministries within the wider fellowship of the universal Church.

I. BACKGROUND

It has been nearly fifty years since the Rev. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, proposed in a sermon at Grace Episcopal Cathedral, San Francisco, the establishment of a dialogue between the Protestant Episcopal Church and the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, in the hope that this would result in a united church that would be “truly catholic and truly reformed”. This would later be expanded to include the United Methodist Church and, subsequently, seven other denominations, including three historically African American Methodist denominations. This would give rise to the Consultation on Church Union, which would subsequently be succeeded in this vision in 2001 by Churches Uniting in Christ, with ten denominations from the Reformed, Anglican, Methodist and Moravian traditions.

Historically, Anglicanism and Presbyterianism grew up as cousins, if not siblings, in England, Scotland and later in Ireland and Wales, and these traditions were transplanted into the American context during the colonial period. Having had common roots in Britain, as well as in the colonies, and being generally of similar socio-economic and educational levels, Presbyterians and Episcopalians have over the years engaged in conversations towards unity on and off since the 1890s.

The definitive statement of the basis for church union in The Episcopal Church, indeed in Anglicanism as a whole, is the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. Originally an invitation by the American Episcopal bishops to discussions of union with various other church bodies, only churches from the Presbyterian tradition initially responded. There were no permanent results of these discussions, although these conversations were background to subsequent and serious proposals towards merger in the 1940s.

II. THE DIALOGUE

The current Presbyterian-Episcopal dialogue is a direct outgrowth of our common participation on the Consultation on Church Union. At the 1999 plenary of COCU, the PCUSA and The Episcopal Church were asked to consider engaging in a bilateral discussion in an attempt to address questions of ministry and polity which would need to be resolved if COCU was to go forward. The 2000 General Convention of The Episcopal Church authorized a bilateral dialogue with the PCUSA. At their initial meeting, held concurrently with the inauguration of CUIC in January, 2002, it was decided that the dialogue’s conversations would take place within the larger context of CUIC’s Ministry Task Force, which was to drafting a proposal for the recognition and reconciliation of ministries.

⁶⁷ Guidelines for implementation will be developed by each of the communions.

MEMBERS

For PCUSA: Elder Freda Gardner, Co-Convener; Dr. Dale Gruder ; Elder Moon Lee; Elder Janice Sperry; the Rev. Dr. George Telford; and the Rev. Dr. Philip Wickeri. Staff support has been provided by the Rev. Robina Winbush and the Rev. Carlos Malave. The Rev. Dr. Lewis Mudge and the Rev. Dr. Joseph Small, Office of Theology, have consulted.

For The Episcopal Church: James Foster; the Rev. Dan Krutz; the Rev. Dirk Reinken; the Rev. Sandra Richardson; the Rt. Rev. Douglas Theuner, Co-Convener; and Dr. Fredrica Harris Thompsett. Staff support has been provided by the Rt. Rev. Christopher C. Epting and Dr. Thomas Ferguson. The Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright has consulted.

The Dialogue has met twice annually since its first meeting in January, 2001, in a variety of venues, including seminaries, diocesan/presbytery offices and at two Presbyterian-Episcopal congregations—Indian Hill Church in Cincinnati and St. Matthew’s Episcopal/Wilton Presbyterian Church in Wilton, Connecticut. The Dialogue team was also in conversation with the concurrent work of the Ministry Task Force of CUIC.

The Dialogue has extensively examined relevant documents and deliberations from the past and present both in the United States and abroad, including the Formula of Agreement between the PCUSA and the ELCA, United Church of Christ and the Reformed Church in America; Call to Common Mission agreement between The Episcopal Church and the ELCA; and the Mutual Recognition and Mutual Reconciliation of Ministries draft document of the CUIC Ministry Task Force. At every meeting of the Dialogue, members have worshipped together using rites approved by either denomination or according to the authorized CUIC liturgy, with ordained ministers of each denomination officiating.

Among the most significant achievements of the Dialogue was the co-sponsorship with CUIC of a Consultation on Episcopate held in St. Louis in October 2006. In addition to opening and closing remarks by representatives of the Disciples of Christ and the Methodist tradition, there were five scholarly papers presented: one by an Episcopalian, two from the Reformed Tradition (PCUSA and UCC) and one each by a member of the ELCA and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. These papers, together with three Bible studies by the Rev. John Ford (Roman Catholic) and other related presentations, are published in *Call to Unity: Resourcing the Church for Ecumenical Ministry*, generously published by the Council on Christian Unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

III. CONCLUSION

At its initial meeting in Memphis in January 2002, the members of the Dialogue who were present agreed that both churches were within the “apostolic succession” as defined by the “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” statement: to stand in the succession of the apostolic faith. However, the Dialogue was still unable to agree on a basis for full mutual recognition and reconciliation of ministry. Disagreements centered on the concepts of “personal” and “corporate” *episcopate*. Episcopalians hold that in order to be in full communion, there must be a sharing in the sign of the historic succession of bishops. Presbyterians believe that *episcopate* has been passed on corporately from apostolic times through the laying-on-of-hands within the presbyterate and speak of a threefold office of ministry (deacon, presbyter and bishop) within the local congregation as a reflection of the ordering of ministry within the apostolic period. Of concern to Presbyterians was the feeling that the CUIC Ministry Task Force proposal failed to recognize the significance of the presbyterate, which Episcopalians felt that they had done in the United States through the requirement of lay involvement and approval at virtually every level of ecclesiastical governance, albeit their lay people are not ordained as elders.

Mutual recognition and reconciliation seems to rest upon mutual acceptance of the concepts of “personal” and “corporate” *episcopate*. Until this matter is mutually resolved it will be difficult to move into full altar and pulpit fellowship, the place where mutual ministry between the denominations seems most

likely to have an effect at the parish level. Because of that, the Dialogue has met with collaborating congregations of each denomination and seeks to encourage church leaders to initiate and nourish additional relationships of that type. Although full mutual recognition and reconciliation of ministry still eludes us, we believe we have found a way in which to encourage preliminary altar and pulpit fellowship and, hence, to allow our congregations of both denominations to commonly pursue the mission and ministry of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, a reality which we believe already exists in the Mind of God.

To that end, the Presbyterian/Episcopal Dialogue requests our respective authorizing bodies to consider the preceding Agreement; to reconstitute the Dialogue for future deliberations; and that both of our Heads of Communion commit themselves publicly to this effort and to consider a public celebration of our progress to date and our hope for the future.

RESOLUTION A076 ESTABLISH DIALOGUE WITH THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on
- 2 Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations to begin a dialogue with the appropriate ecumenical offices of the
- 3 Church of Sweden, the ultimate goal of which is to reach a relationship of full communion between The
- 4 Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden; and be it further
- 5
- 6 *Resolved*, That the Standing Commission do so in consultation with the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on
- 7 Ecumenical Relations.

EXPLANATION

The relationship between The Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden goes back to the beginnings of The Episcopal Church, including the transfer of oversight of several Swedish Lutheran congregations during the colonial and Revolutionary periods. In addition, the Lambeth Conferences of Bishops have given favorable consideration to the historic Episcopal succession of the Church of Sweden (see relevant Resolutions from the 1908, 1920, and 1930 Lambeth Conferences). However, the informal recognition of the validity of each Church's Orders by the other has never been formally instituted by The Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden. During recent dialogues among the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht and la Iglesia Independiente Filipina with The Episcopal Church, with Swedish Lutheran observers present, this lack of formal recognition became highlighted. Pursuing a formal dialogue will not only result hopefully in a full-communion agreement, but also raise the question anew of joining the full communion relationship between the Scandinavian Lutheran churches and the Church of England known as the Porvoo Agreement. It will also help to facilitate common ministry, mission and witness in the Convocation of American Episcopal Churches in Europe.

**IV. ONGOING GENERAL CONVENTION MANDATES
CHURCHES UNITING IN CHRIST**

Having been a founding member of Consultation on Church Union (COCU) over forty years ago, The Episcopal Church has a great stake in its successor, Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC). Over the life of COCU and CUIC the goal of reaching full communion has been an elusive one, failing to come to fruition primarily because of the inability to reconcile ministries among the nine (later 10) member communions. Exacerbating that problem in the last triennium has been the sin of racism which, along with attaining full communion, has been one of the two central foci of CUIC. The problem is that racism has been named within CUIC as part of the failure to reconcile ministries.

While the assertion that racism is present among the member communions has caused heartache and deep concern, it has also finally brought to the surface one of the primary impediments to moving forward with reconciliation of ministries and full communion. It is indeed possible that the events and conversations over the past three years concerning racism among the member communions of CUIC will prove to be a watershed moment in the life of the organization. Now that the issue is squarely on the

table and all ten member communions are willing to openly talk about it, there is great hope that something very positive will arise out of the pain of the present time.

In response, at its October 2008 the SCEIR passed the following internal Resolution of the SCEIR on the continuing work of CUIC in the reconciliation of ministries and overcoming racism:

Resolved, the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (SCEIR) of The Episcopal Church at its October 2008 meeting expresses profound regret at offense caused by any actions of The Episcopal Church, and asks forgiveness from CUIC members; and be it further

Resolved, that the SCEIR asks for specific conversation, dialogue, and assistance in understanding how we can move forward in addressing the fundamentally interrelated issues of racism and reconciliation of ministries.

INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

As noted above in the explanation to Resolution A074, endorsing the proposed statement on interreligious relations, in 2003 the SCEIR was officially charged with oversight and coordination of the interreligious work of The Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church is committed to working ecumenically with regards to its work in interreligious relations, and one of the most prominent ways in which this is done is through the NCC Interfaith Commission. The Rev Dr Gwynne Guibord chairs this Commission. Through the NCC Interfaith Commission, The Episcopal Church is involved in a national Christian-Jewish dialogue and Christian-Muslim dialogue, as well as a task force on Christian Zionism.

ANGLICAN ROMAN CATHOLIC CONSULTATION IN THE USA

The 62nd meeting of the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue in the United States (ARCUSA) inaugurated a brand new round of this ecumenical conversation which is one of The Episcopal Church's oldest. While the early part of this triennium's work revolved around making responses to "Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ" from the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) and "Growing Together in Unity and Mission" from the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission (IARCCUM), the new topic will be "Ecclesiology and Moral Discernment: Convergences and Differences."

INTERNATIONAL ANGLICAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE

The Episcopal Church was represented on the International Anglican Orthodox Theological Dialogue by the Rt. Rev. Mark Dyer, Retired Bishop of Bethlehem, and the Rt. Rev. William Gregg, Assisting Bishop in North Carolina. Coordinated by the Anglican Communion, this third round of dialogue concluded with the publication of *The Church of the Triune God: the Cyprus Agreed Statement* in 2007. This significant document summarizes the last fifteen years of dialogue and is available through the Anglican Communion Office, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/orthodox/index.cfm>.

PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENT CHURCH-EPISCOPAL CHURCH CONCORDAT COUNCIL

The Episcopal Church and the Philippine Independent Church have been in full communion since 1961. In 2006, an updated Concordat between the two churches was signed, which recommitted the two churches to working more closely together in mission and witness. A Concordat Council meets regularly to foster partnership between the two churches. An important focus during the 2006-2009 triennium was a major series of theological symposia on "Catholicity and Globalization," sponsored jointly by the Philippine Independent Church, Episcopal Church, and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht (the Church of Sweden participated as well). Each church hosted portion of these discussions. The papers and agreed theological statements of this dialogue are being edited for publication.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Founded in 1950, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. is made up of a wide spectrum of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Evangelical, historic African American and Living Peace churches and represents 45 million Christians in more than 100,000 congregations across the nation. With the selection in 2007 of Dr. Michael Kinnamon as the new General Secretary, the organization has experienced a renewal of purpose as a “community of communions” and its historic witness for justice and peace balanced by new attention to ecclesiology and the search for Christian unity. A full description of the work of the NCC and its ministries can be found at <http://www.nccusa.org/>. The NCC represents the long-standing hope for coordinated common witness for Christian churches in this country. Ms. Alice Webley and Bishop Christopher Epting serve on the NCCUSA's Governing Board.

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The World Council of Churches, of which The Episcopal Church was a founding member in 1948, remains the broadest expression of the worldwide ecumenical movement with 349 member churches from 110 countries. This last triennium has seen considerable restructuring as the Council attempts to live into the mandates of the 2006 Assembly in Brazil. While continuing its witness through such programs as The Decade to Overcome Violence, the WCC has strengthened its work in Faith and Order through the calls of the Rev. Dr. John Gibaut, a Canadian Anglican, as Director of Faith and Order, and American Baptist, the Rev. Dr. Shanta Premawardhana, as Director of Interfaith Relations. For more information on the programs and ministries of the WCC, please visit <http://www.oikoumene.org/>. Ms. Sarah Harte represents The Episcopal Church on the WCC's Central Committee.

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES TOGETHER IN THE USA

Christian Churches Together (CCT) is the broadest ecumenical organization ever gathered in the USA. The Roman Catholic Church and many Orthodox Churches are members, as well as a number of evangelical, Pentecostal, and charismatic churches, in addition to historically Protestant churches. The Episcopal Church joined CCT by action of Executive Council in February 2005. CCT holds an annual meeting, at which time churches engage in prayer, theological conversations and discuss possible areas of joint witness and advocacy. CCT is intended to be more a forum to allow churches to be in conversation, and not an organization which takes independent action. It is also not intended to replace the NCC or WCC, but rather provide another venue for ecumenical engagement. More information can be found at <http://www.christianchurchestogether.org/>.

LUTHERAN-EPISCOPAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee (LECC) was established by the 2000 General Convention as part of the Resolution establishing full communion between The Episcopal Church and the ELCA. The LECC provides guidance and oversight to the full communion between the ELCA and The Episcopal Church. Current membership includes the Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, the Rt. Rev. Nedi Rivera, the Rev. Jon Perez, the Rev. Jeanne Lutz, and Ms. Emily Perow. The LECC completed a major study on the diaconate, in consultation with seminaries and ministry development units of each church, recommending a shared “diakonia” in both churches whenever possible. The Committee connected with grassroots ecumenical efforts in meetings in Virginia, Iowa and Los Angeles, and, in turn, receiving recommendations to encourage shared national work in liturgy, education, congregational development and other ministries. The LECC also met with leaders of military chaplaincies to learn of challenges and opportunities the area of federal chaplaincies. In addition, there are numerous instances of mutual consultation and cooperation between the two churches, including an Episcopal observer to the proposed ELCA-United Methodist full communion proposal and to the Lutheran-Muslim Consultative panel, as well as a mutual meeting of the Moravian-Episcopal Dialogue and the Lutheran-Moravian Full Communion Consultative Committee. In addition, the SCEIR has included representatives from the ELCA in the drafting of its interreligious relations statement.

EDEIO: EPISCOPAL DIOCESAN ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS OFFICERS NETWORK

This church's principal organization for the promotion of Christian unity and relations with other religions on the local level is EDEIO. Each diocese has an Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer (EIO), appointed by the bishop, and many have Ecumenical and Interreligious Commissions or Committees. Every EIO is a member of EDEIO, which is charged with informing and engaging the diocesan EIOs in this work. The EDEIO network is supported financially by annual contributions of \$250 from each diocese and by subsidies from the General Convention.

EDEIO publishes a monthly newsletter online and provides an annual training event, conducted in concert with several other major Christian denominations: the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU). Diocesan EIOs are brought up to date on current efforts towards Christian unity, and they are invited to engage in study and discussion of the ecumenical and interreligious policies and programs of The Episcopal Church. Most dioceses provide funding to make it possible for their EIOs to participate in these events and bring their learnings home to the diocese. In this triennium, National Workshops were held in Washington, DC (2007); Chicago, IL (2008); and Phoenix, AZ (2009). The 2010 Conference will be held in Tampa, Florida. EDEIO sponsors an annual essay contest for seminarians and from time to time publishes helpful booklets for use on the local level.