

**Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee**  
**April 6-7, 2010**  
**Lutheran Center, Chicago, IL**

Present: Jeanne Lutz, Sherman Hicks, Kay Beach, Don McCoid, Tom Ferguson, Jon Perez, Lowell Almen, Mitzi Budde, Alan Scarfe, Elizabeth Eaton, Nedi Rivera

Regrets: Jon Anderson

Resigned: Emily Perow

Guests: Ellen Wondra, Susanne Watson Epting, Natasha Klukach

1. Meeting convened at 9:01 am. Tom Ferguson opened with prayer
2. Check in from members followed. Don and Tom both shared the transition in staffing and funding at the national offices. Lowell Almen shared that he has a book coming out on the history of Lutheran pension funds. Natasha Klukach introduced herself as the interim coordinator for ecumenical affairs for the Anglican Church of Canada. Mitzi reflected on the ELCA ecumenical pilgrimage to London, Istanbul, Rome, and Geneva.
3. After a break, the Committee reconvened and began to work through updates from various communions. The LECC was joined by the Rev Dr Ellen Wondra. Bishop Scarfe talked about some of our regions and jurisdictions have worked through some of the issues relating to human sexuality.

The Lutherans spoke of the August 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Don (and others) talked about the three main issues: 1) Social Statement on Human Sexuality, 2) full communion with the United Methodist Church, and 3) authorization for service of gay and lesbian pastors and blessing of same sex unions. Several Synods are experiencing significant internal dissension over these questions. Don also talked about relationships with ecumenical partners, particularly the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Church. Bishop Eaton and Don also mentioned the way partnerships with the UMC are developing.

Within the LWF, Don talked about the Church of Sweden, which permits same sex blessings and currently has an openly lesbian bishop in a committed relationship. There has been reaction within the LWF as well, largely from Asia (though not all Asia) and Africa.

Tom talked about the ecumenical work of General Convention 2009: 1) full communion with the Northern Province and Southern Province of the Moravian Church (Moravians will vote in June 2010 and September 2010); 2) endorsement of a statement on Interreligious Relations; 3) Agreement with the Presbyterian Church USA to continue dialogue and collaborate where possible in mission and ministry.

Bishop Scarfe mentioned the Anglican Covenant process, which has been endorsed by the Anglican Consultative Council in May of 2009 and has been sent to member provinces for consideration. He also spoke of the process in the diocese of Iowa for blessing same sex unions, which is part of a larger process of collecting information about this process in the church which is going on in the House of Bishops. The House of Bishops Theology Committee also recently released its theological report on the blessing of same sex unions.

Alan also talked about the budgetary implications, where 27% of the budget was cut, resulting in layoffs from almost 30% of national staff.

Alan also spoke about Resolution C056 and D025, which dealt with same sex blessings and consecration of openly gay and lesbian partnered clergy as bishops. There was a question of whether Resolution D025 repealed a previous resolution from 2006, B033, which asked the church to exercise “restraint” in giving consent to Episcopal candidates whose matter of life may be a “challenge.” The Rev Canon Mary Glasspool, a partnered lesbian woman, was approved as bishop suffragan of Los Angeles in March of 2010.

4. The LECC was joined by invited guests for a discussion of theological education: Susanne Watson Epting, Ellen Wondra, and Jonathan Strandjord.

Ellen Wondra began the discussion, circulating materials on statistics for ELCA and Episcopal Church seminaries. “Traditional” defined a largely three-years with classes on-site on campus. She also gave an overview of how seminaries relate to the church, which is very different from the ELCA. Of the 11, only 2 are west of the Mississippi and four are in the northeast corridor. There is no funding from the national church.

1998: 65 of 74 freestanding seminaries operation < \$1,000,000 deficit

2008: 46 had deficit > 1,000,000

Reserve capacity <6 months from 12% to 29%

Strategies: 1. push development and recruitment for unchanged program. 2. add other programs that will shore up residential MDiv. 3. trust that church as a whole will recognize situation and step up. 4. sell unneeded property.

She also spoke of “alternative delivery systems” and the need for more partnerships (and ones which are not competitive). Ecumenical cooperation is also a matter of survival and not just cooperation – issues include equity among partners and geographic issues. Another option is to move from consortia to consolidated or federated seminaries, and multiple delivery formats in partnership and collaboration, including apprenticeship models. This also has implications for our understanding of formation, identity, and spirituality.

Discussion followed.

5. Jonathan then gave an overview of theological education. The ELCA has significantly more partnership, oversight, and funding into the seminaries. The seminaries have formed into clusters and are working to communicate more closely with the Conference of Bishops and the office for Education and Vocation on issues of governance.

Jonathan mentioned existing relationships – Bexley/Trinity, CDS/PLTS, among others, including a new relationship with Seabury and Wartburg where Seabury courses count not as electives but towards core degree requirements.

Discussion followed. Ellen noted the move towards centralized governance in the ELCA and the reality this is not happening in the Episcopal Church.

Mitzi said that she did not see how the ecumenical agreements that we have are impacting these discussions in theological education.

6. The minutes of the June, 2009 were approved.

7. Discussion of matters requiring followup from last meeting were discussed. Mitzi then reminded the group of the Moravian suggestion of having a trilateral full communion coordinating committee. This discussion may be begun at this meeting, but substantively should be postponed until after the Moravians vote on the full communion proposals. Staff will explore possibilities. The guidelines on proposals for joint/federated congregations was also discussed. The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations for the Episcopal Church will hopefully have draft guidelines by the end of the 2009-2012 triennium. Jeanne Lutz passed around the canon passed by the diocese of Rio Grande giving voice and vote to ELCA pastors (except in Episcopal elections). Bishop Epting and Bishop Scarfe did not make a proposal to have the 2012 General Convention take any action or recommendation on a similar proposal.

8. Bishop Rivera talked about the situation in Eastern Oregon, which has 22 congregations in a large geographic area. She then noted that she has been considering a proposal where the bishop in Eastern Oregon could be an assisting bishop in the Episcopal diocese of Oregon as well as in the Rocky Mountain Synod of the ELCA.

9. Planning for next meeting: February 21-23, 2010. Arrival on February 21, meet in evening, conclude by noon on February 23.

10. Susanne Watson Epting gave a presentation on theological education. She spoke of the Theological Education for All initiative, as part of an updating of the 1966 Pusey Report on theological education – which came before Prayer Book Revision, Ordination of Women, revival of the diaconate, among other events and developments. In particular she emphasized the place of baptismal ecclesiology and understanding of ministry, and mentioned Roland Allen and his understandings of ministry and congregational development. A theology rooted in baptism changes everything. She also talked about

networks coming into being to meet needs which aren't being met elsewhere. What is needed: accessible, affordable education; lifelong learning; accessible faculty; formation which includes community of practice; competency-based programs; leadership in a partnership model. Susanne specifically highlighted the book "Multiple Paths to Ministry." There is also the difficulty of diocesan requirements and processes for formation. She also mentioned the Ministry Developers Network and mentoring/coaching/competency based models.

Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson brought greetings and briefly spoke to the LECC, speaking of "evangelical missional imagination" and the need to be called outward, not just inward.

11. Laura Wilhelm, Director of Lifelong Learning, LSTC and the Rev Richard Bruesehoff, Director of Lifelong Learning, ELCA joined the LECC for a presentation. Richard highlighted the need for flexibility, in particular Meade's *Once and Future Church*. He noted the influence of a "culture of expertise" in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Dick then spoke of the Study of Ministry Report of the ELCA and the complex array of offices and licensed ministries inherited from the predecessor churches which formed the ELCA, and the goal of having ministries be equipping others to do ministry, and of theological education/lifelong learning to be equipping the equippers – including issue of how much continuing education should be required. Laura talked about the ways that LSTC is looking at online and lifelong learning opportunities.

General discussion followed, including how folks both use online offerings as discernment as well as part of formation and training.

12. After a break, Natasha Klukach gave an update on relations between the ELCIC and the Anglican Church of Canada. The big news are the plans for a joint national office in Ottawa. She also spoke of the close relationship between the ACC primate and national bishops of the ELCIC. The House of Bishops and Conference of Bishops meet once per year in the fall. There is nothing either church does without consulting with the other.

She specifically spoke about theological education, since it is also a focus in Canada. She also spoke about concerns of equality of clergy and access by clergy. Regarding diaconal ministers, the ELCIC is willing to ordain diaconal ministers.

She then reflected on what she had been hearing from the LECC conversations – particularly noting the collegiality and enthusiasm, as well as a desire to do more. She is still surprised to see the level of information sharing that is needed, and noted there is a lot of operating in kind of "parallel" modes. Full communion relationships with other churches is also an interesting development.

13. The CCM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary planning was discussed. There will be regional celebrations rather than a national one. What is happening locally and being planned?

Members updated the dialogue on their plans for local celebrations. In particular: could we use time at Synod Assembly and Diocesan Conventions in 2011 to commemorate this?

In lieu of a national gathering, we have invited one another's presiding bishops to each others' episcopal gatherings: PB Hanson will attend the House of Bishops, and PB Jefferts Schori will attend the Conference of Bishops meeting.

The Washington, DC area will continue with their plans to do a 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

Bishop Rivera suggested creating a CCM calendar for events coming up for that year; universal acclaim to do such a thing.

Lowell Almen and Nedi Rivera to write set of prayers for CCM anniversary celebrations. Bishop Scarfe will do a survey of Province VI. We could also do a bulletin insert.

14. The three-year plan was then reviewed and planning for February 2011 meeting. There was some discussion about bringing in an outside facilitator to help with long term strategic planning. Mitzi reminded us that the Monterey location was chosen because of an emphasis on looking at mutual ministry and campus ministry. The meeting after February 2011 will be held at the ELCA Churchwide Headquarters.

Lowell offered "imagining our future together" as way to plan our time.

Potential dates: February of 2012.

The next meeting of the Canadian JELC is in October of 2010.

Bishop Scarfe spoke of the need to discuss multicultural ministry and engaging young adults. He also suggested looking at the Canadian solution for solving the diakonia situation.

Bishop Scarfe asked how we would follow up on theological education focus of this meeting. Should we get the bishops and the deans together?

--Bishop Scarfe and Rivera will talk to the bishops who are on the Episcopal Church theological education task force.

--Invite members from the Episcopal Church to the ELCA theological seminaries' cluster meetings.

15. Feedback and evaluation of meeting followed.

Don and Sherman spoke of the need for people of color/other primary languages than English for future appointments.

The format and structure of the agenda, and content for the meeting, was affirmed.

Bishop Scarfe led afternoon prayers.

16. Meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.