

LUTHERAN - EPISCOPAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Minutes of LECC Meeting
4 - 5 December 2013 & 9 January 2014
ELCA Offices, Higgins Road, Chicago, IL

I. Preliminaries

LECC members gathered in our meeting venue at noon on Wednesday 4 December 2013 for lunch followed by the Noonday Office (Book of Common Prayer). Co-Chair Mitzi Budde called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m., requested or announced adjustments that needed to be made to the pre-meeting draft of the agenda, and invited introductions around the table, asking in view of the recent holiday, that all offer brief reflections on something for which they were particularly thankful in the recent past. This last was repeated as others joined the meeting at later times.

At the beginning of the afternoon session, Elizabeth Eaton, former LECC member and now Presiding Bishop of the ELCA greeted the group and commended its on-going work in the realization of full communion between our two churches. She was received with enthusiastic applause.

Present: Mitzi Budde, Co-chair; Jill Clark, Natalie Gessert, Sherman Hicks, Don Kreiss, Don McCoid, Jon Perez, Bill Petersen, and Nedi Rivera. Co-Chair Alan Scarfe and Kay Beach were delayed by a weather-canceled flight and drove from Des Moines, joining the meeting only 1 hour late! Lowell Allman joined the meeting at dinner time.

Regrets: Claire Burkat (previous engagements, new member replacing newly-elected ELCA PB Elizabeth Eaton), Margaret Rose (TEC Ecumenical Officer, getting married).

Minutes & Documents: MSC to accept minutes of previous meeting (6-8 February 2013); Bill Petersen will continue as a TEC consultant to take and prepare minutes; a catalogue of documents distributed prior to or during this meeting is appended to these minutes.

II. Wednesday Afternoon Session

A. Lutheran-Moravian Coordinating Committee Report. Nedi Goss reported on this 14-16 July 2013 gathering in Bethlehem, PA. The time featured a Moravian Love Feast at which about 1000 persons were present and for which the stated intention was Lutheran-Moravian-Episcopal unity. A joint choir was provided from seven local congregations and along with the hymn sing enhanced a vibrant liturgical and musical experience. Following the service there was a meeting of the overlapping committees, a presentation on the history of the Moravians, a tour of Bethlehem and the introduction to cooperative mission among local churches. Particularly noted in this report was the great hospitality extended by the Moravian community. In response to questions, Mitzi Budde noted that this gathering counted as a Mor-ELCA-TEC joint meeting and that sorting out the future pattern and venues for these gatherings would be a matter of business later in this LECC meeting.

B. ELCA Report. Don McCoid reported first on the transition from Mark Hanson to Elizabeth Eaton as ELCA's newly elected Presiding Bishop. Also at the Churchwide Assembly last August the ELCA adopted a new social statement entitled "The Church and Criminal Justice" (<http://www.elca.org>). There will also be a new statement in January 2014, following up on the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ), called "Declaration on the Way." It is the result of a meeting of former PB Mark Hanson and Don McCoid with the Pontifical Council on Christian Unity (POPCU). The statement arises out of the national context and follows upon a set of papers presented by Doctors Joy Shroeder, William Rusch, and Kathryn Johnson along with their Roman Catholic counterparts, Jared Wicks, Susan Wood, and Brian Daley. The papers concern theological convergences between the churches on matters of ecclesiology, the Eucharist, and the ordained ministry. The statement is cast as a part of "harvesting the fruits of ecumenism" and therefore does not require re-opening the JDDJ document itself. In larger perspective, the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican have adapted a statement on the upcoming (2017) 500th anniversary of the Reformation, entitled "From Conflict to Communion" Don highlighted the five ecumenical imperatives at the end of this document, downloadable from the LWF web: <http://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/From%20Conflict%20to%20Communion.pdf>. It was noted, in conclusion, that the ELCA financial outlook for 2014 appears presently stable, but that this could change with the result that some national ministries may not be able to be supported as before. The watchword, however, is cautious optimism.

C. TEC Report. Alan Scarfe reported first on the continuing task of restructuring within TEC as authorized by General Convention, noting that (a) ideas are still being received and (b) staff are contributing greatly to the process. He described budget formation for TEC as more flexible than previously was the case, seeing this as a positive development. The House of Bishops has begun to invite several active bishops to speak for 15 minutes at its meetings on a common category, sharing life experience from personal perspectives (at their autumn meeting, for instance, five bishops from various locales spoke on the subject of "loss"). Ecumenically, the developing relationship with the United Methodist Church has currently high attention (a UMC bishop was in attendance at HOB's fall gathering). It presently remains a question whether the proposal for full UMC-TEC communion has been perfected sufficiently for a resolution to come before General Convention in 2015. Several questions revolve around ordained ministry. Also being closely monitored by TEC is the UMC discussion around so-called "virtual communion." In the discussion that followed, several others commented on this last matter and Natalie Gessert offered a reflection on "virtual communion" and the reality "out there" in contemporary society.

The Chair declared a break from 2:45 - 3:05 p.m. when the meeting reconvened.

Note: In order to regain some time, the next scheduled item on the agenda, viz. M. Budde's paper, was declared by the Chair to be a "floater" and postponed for consideration later in the meeting, Reports, therefore, continued.

D. Task Group on Communications . Jill Clark reviewed both the process of and contributions to the LECC Face Book page and invited those present who are on Facebook to view and experiment with the page at that moment. Reflections were offered on the page as a potential recruiting tool and as a creator of virtual community. Reach-outs so far have had limited success,

but Jill stressed the importance of inviting people to share their stories and be willing to make posts. Creating a database of Lutheran-Episcopal congregations from the website work already done by Jon Perez will be key. Following the report questions of clarification were asked and suggestions made to Jill about ways and means during general discussion.

E. TEC Canon Change to Facilitate Joint Parishes & Ministries. Jon Perez reported on the project to create a canon in this regard for TEC. It would meet an ecumenical gap since TEC's canons do not envision any such situation. Consultants and volunteers from TEC and ELCA have begun work on the various facets of this project, including many issues to be sorted out. Margaret Rose has some funding to bring together a group of diocesan chancellors though a question concerning who and how many should serve on this project remains. General discussion ensued.

Action: moved (Nedi Rivera) that LECC endorse ongoing work on a TEC canon in this matter with ecumenical participation as directed by Jon Perez and Margaret Rose; **seconded** (Kay Beach) and **carried** unanimously.

F. Request for Ecumenical Protocol Guidance on Ordinations/Consecrations/Installments. Mitzi Budde informed LECC of a request from a diocesan ecumenical officer with responsibility for liturgical planning of a consecration about ecumenical protocols for such occasions. Don McCord shared a copy of ELCA protocols for planning. Bill Petersen volunteered to check with Canon Robertson (Assistant to PB) about the existence of such for TEC. Nedi Rivera suggested that matters such as this might be posted on the web/FB for discussion under the aegis of promoting "best practices," while Mitzi Budde asked for opinion on whether such matters were within the purview of LECC. The consensus was in the affirmative.

At 4:45 p.m. a fifteen minutes break was taken.

G. Consideration of *Are We There Yet? – The Task & Function of Full Communion Coordinating Committees*. Mitzi's article has been published in the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 48:I, Winter 2013 and copies provided with permission to LECC members. There was a general expression of great gratitude for the paper, especially with regard to the comprehensiveness of its reporting, accessibility for the non-technical reader, percipience of analysis, and the quality of ecumenical encouragement. In discussion anecdotes of cooperation in mission and growing bonds of friendship were exchanged.

Action: by acclamation Mitzi Budde was encouraged to seek permission from *JES* to post the article on LECC's web page and on the respective churches' listserv to bishops and, further, that members of our ecumenical commissions/committees should be encouraged to read the article.

It was determined to conclude the day's agenda prior to dinner and reconvene Thursday.

H. Presiding Bishops' Joint Statement on AIDS/HIV. This remarkable development of common statements by the presiding bishops was highlighted. With this statement there are two such documents (one international, one national). General discussion concerned the process by

which joint statements/pastoral letters in our churches are composed, edited, published, promulgated, and received. The committee asked for clarification about the difference between “joint statements” and “pastoral letters”; Bishop Scarfe explained that pastoral letters must be read in the parishes in the Episcopal Church.

I. Budget Considerations. It was reported that we are currently meeting on a nine-month cycle due to budget restrictions by our respective churches. In Canada, the Joint Lutheran-Anglican Commission (JALC) has been totally reconstituted and at present meeting dates are not known. When that information is available, it may be possible to plan another common meeting between LECC and JALC

J. Date of Next LECC Meeting. November 5 - 7, 2014, are set as dates for the next LECC meeting. Venues discussed were Eastern Oregon; Washington, DC; or Detroit. Bp. Donald Kreiss’ invitation to Detroit was accepted. Focus will be on engagement of local ministries pertinent to LECC, with visits to joint Latino ministry and Spirit of Hope urban gardening project.

K. 500th Anniversary of Reformation. It was noted for all that the commemoration of this significant observance in 2017 would feature “continued renewal” as a central emphasis. Don McCoid stated that no national observance of the Reformation 2017 anniversary is being planned.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. for dinner.

III. Thursday Morning Session

The meeting re-convened at 8:10 a.m. with Morning Prayer in the Anglican tradition.

A. Full Communion Examples & Reception. At 8:24 Mitzi Budde called for check-in and updates around the table with specific reference to TEC-ELCA full communion experiences of local reception. She also particularly highlighted the forthcoming September 2014 meeting of the Anglican-Lutheran Society in Budapest, Hungary and encouraged the LECC members to join the U.S. branch of the Society, the International Lutheran Episcopal Society: <http://www.alsocietyusa.org/>.

Don McCoid (on behalf of Sherman Hicks – full report below) the joint meeting of TEC’s & ELCA’s social justice agencies; also noted were common initiatives on youth ministries, women’s networking, campus ministry and, in two cases (Guam and Eastern Oregon) developing proposals for common synods/dioceses. He also highlighted the recent AIDS/HIV Joint Pastoral Letter (see above I.H).

Alan Scarfe noted joint ELCA - TEC networks in North Carolina, Southern Ohio, and Ohio.

Bill Petersen highlighted the Climate Change Conference held in Washington, DC, in May 2013 that was jointly sponsored by TEC and the Church of Sweden

(Svenska kyrkan).

Lowell Allman referred to common ELCA-TEC military chaplaincy work particularly noting their common dedication to working with people whose lives are “on the line.”

Jon Perez observed examples of teamwork between campus and military chaplains in regard to ways and means for pastoral counseling of people within their respective ecclesial constituencies (this particularly applicable, e.g. to pre-nuptial counseling and work with the LGBT community.

Don Kreiss attested to increasing frequency of regular meetings between and among rostered leaders of our two churches.

Alan Scarfe reported on a retired ELCA bishop serving as the pastor of a TEC parish in Iowa (and his having to bear their insistence on calling him “Bishop”!); he commented further on our joint attempts to learn common methods of partnering in specialized ministries (e.g., campus, military, Hispanic &c).

Sherman Hicks commented, in regard to Alan’s last remark, on common ELCA-TEC campus ministries in the Chicago and Northern Illinois areas that might serve as encouragement.

B. Report on LECC To SCEIR. Alan Scarfe was asked to circulate copies of his report about LECC to TEC’s Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. Time was taken to read the report and comment upon it.

C. TEC - ELCA Social Ministries Initiative. Sherman Hicks reported on the 24-25 October 2013 joint meeting at Episcopal Church headquarters in NYC of the ELCA and TEC ethnic specific / social justice ministries (see documents catalogue). The emphasis of that meeting was, first, mutual education about involvements and approaches and, second, about moving from the avoidance of duplication to positive collaboration. Communities involved in the overall work of these agencies include: Afro-American, African Nationals, Afro-Caribbean, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and ethnicities of Oceania. This initiative is another fruit of full communion.

At 9:40 a.m. the group took a ten-minute break and at Bp. Rivera’s suggestion a collection was taken up for a group donation to Episcopal Relief & Development as a gift in honor of Margaret Rose on the occasion of her marriage.

D. LECC Response to General Convention’s 2012 A036 Resolution. Under consideration at this point was the 3 December 2013 draft of LECC’s response as it had been brought to this point by Lowell Allman with help from Alan Scarfe and comments on previous editions by others of the commission. Following discussion process toward perfecting the document, consideration turned to the currently fraught state of diaconal ministries and the questions surrounding lay presidency at the Eucharist in both the Lutheran and Anglican Communion. The avoidance of potential collateral damage unintentionally done by the timing of the LECC report was discussed

also. Work then moved to section-by-section group editing of the draft.

At 11:08 a.m. the group adjourned to the first floor chapel for a celebration of the Eucharist with Nedi Rivera presiding and Don Kreiss preaching and Kay Beach serving as organist. The Liturgy was followed by lunch at our meeting venue, after which the meeting reconvened with further consideration of III.D.

Further comments were received around the table, common and church-specific issues about diaconate and lay presidency analyzed, and editing of the draft continued. All things considered, it was noted that the document could not be finished at this meeting. The deadline for submitting the document to TEC before the 2015 General Convention is SCEIR's autumn 2014 meeting.

Action. It was determined **by consensus** that all re-writes, suggested emendations, and new material be submitted to Lowell Allman by 17 December for his editorial consideration as principal drafter. The resulting draft will be sent to all LECC members as an e-file by the Feast of the Epiphany. On 9 January (courtesy of Nedi Rivera's office) there will be a LECC video conference at 3:30 p.m. EST to consider and adopt the document. Alan Scarfe and Don McCoid will then share it with respective ecumenical commission/committee heads to ascertain whether further work needs to be done before official submission.

A brief break was taken at 2:10 p.m. with two agenda items left.

E. Outcomes of Meeting. Mitzi Budde asked for comment on the three or four most significant outcomes of this meeting. In order they were: the A036 response document; the report on the joint TEC-ELCA social agencies meeting; and items mentioned in the document distributed by Don McCoid on TEC-ELCA sharing at national levels; the on-going work of the task groups; and the apparent need to form a task group on issues around canon revision in TEC to address new situations resultant from full communion with the ELCA.

F. Evaluation of Meeting. The agenda was well-constructed; the leadership of the co-chairs "fabulous!"; the method for dealing with the drafting and perfecting of the response to A036 was applauded; it was suggested that there be more time for non-official agenda time for building of friendships and sharing life experiences. Don McCoid was thanked for meeting arrangements and asked to convey the group's great gratitude to Eileen Heffner for the meal arrangements and hospitality extended to the group. The worship arrangements were generally commended (Mitzi was thanked for provision of comprehensive and attractive Eucharist booklet) and the alternating of traditions during meetings was commended.

At 3:45 p.m. the meeting was adjourned until the video conference of 9 January 2014

G. Adoption of LECC Response to A036. The meeting reconvened by video conference at 3:30 p.m. EST on 9 January 2014 to consider the draft completed by Lowell Allman on 2 January and sent by e-file to the membership for its consideration. Present on the call: Mitzi Budde and Alan Scarfe, co-chairs; Lowell Almen, Donald Kreiss, Claire Burkat, Sherman Hicks, Don McCoid, Nedi Rivera, Margaret Rose, Jill Clark, Bill Petersen, Natalie Gessert. After due deliberation and

minor emendation the draft was unanimously adopted by LECC with the title **Response of the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee to the Request of the Seventy-Seventh General Convention of the Episcopal Church.**

The meeting was adjourned sine die at the conclusion of the video conference.

IV. Catalogue of Documents Distributed Before or During the Meeting

01. Updated Roster & Contact Information of LECC Membership.
02. LECC Minutes for 6 - 8 February 2013 meeting at Niagara Falls, Ontario.
03. LECC Five Year Plan 2008-2012 plus Four Year Plan 2013-2016.
04. List of LECC Task Groups established 31 May 2012.
05. Draft Version (Response to A036) of 6 December 2013.
06. Press release "Episcopal, ELCA Presiding Bishops issue World AIDS Day 2013 statement."
- 07 Mitzi J. Budde, "Are We There Yet? – The Task and Function of Full-Communion Coordinating Committees, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 46:I, Winter 2013.
08. Sherman Hicks, "Notes during joint meeting of the Diversity & Ethnic Ministries of TEC and the Ethnic Specific/Multicultural Ministries of the ELCA held on October 24-25 2013 at the Episcopal Church Center, NYC."
09. "Shared Ministries with TEC" (distributed by Don McCoid).
10. Alan Scarfe, "Report on LECC to SCEIR."
10. Draft Version (Response to A036) of 2 January 2014 (distributed by e-file).