

Update on the work of the Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission December 2008

The Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission met for the third time since National Convention/General Synod 2007, in balmy – well not balmy, but sunny – Winnipeg, December 11-13, 2008.

Members of the Commission were pleased to begin their meeting at the national offices of the ELCIC and to meet with National Bishop Susan Johnson, Director of Stewardship and Communications, Trina Gallop, Director of Finance and Administration, Gloria McNabb, and Assistant to the National Bishop, the Rev. Paul Gehrs. Helpful discussion focussed on communication between the two churches and to the world at large. Issues such as joint meetings, joint web-sites, and ways to make communication about our churches easier for members of both churches were discussed.

After dinner in downtown Winnipeg, members of the commission were graciously hosted for dessert and coffee by National Bishop Susan Johnson in her own home.

The remainder of the meeting took place at the St. Charles Retreat Centre in west Winnipeg. The success of a recent joint meeting of national staff members, held in Toronto in September, was noted, and commissioners expressed their hope that more of such meetings could be organized in the near future with other staff members of both churches.

Bishop Colin Johnson and Canon Barnett-Cowan reported on the Lambeth Conference, and reports were heard from recent meetings of ALIC (Anglican Lutheran International Commission), IASCER (Inter-Anglican Standing Committee on Ecumenical Relations, and from the most recent meetings of both The Council of General Synod (Anglican) and National Church Council (Lutheran).

Bishops Johnson and Pryse reported on the recent joint meetings of the House of Bishops/Conference of Bishops. It had indeed been a *joint* meeting, and both bishops were very positive about the ways in which the Bishops of both churches were meeting together and sharing both information and expertise together.

Members of the Commission continued to work on the *ambitious agenda* for our two churches which had been identified at previous meetings, including updates on Theological education, alternate routes to ordination, the issue of interchangeability of members, the writing of confirmation protocols by Bishops Halmarson and Kerr-Wilson, and the inclusion of a commissioner on the Anglican Theological Education Working Group. There was a significant conversation about the Diaconate and a small group is going to work on a document concerning standards of formation. Paul Johnson reviewed the recent meeting of ALCOT (Anglican Lutheran Conversation on Transitivity – involving ecumenical officers of all four north American churches – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Episcopal Church, ELCIC and ACC), and of LECC

(Lutheran Episcopal Coordinating Committee), a member of which will be invited to the next meeting of the Commission in Ottawa.

Peter Wall agreed to speak with Archbishop Hiltz about joint meetings of national executives, and the commission noted that conversations are still underway to plan for a joint General Synod/National Convention meeting, possibly in Ottawa, in 2013.

The Faith and Order Commission (WCC) document, *The Nature and Mission of the Church*, was reviewed. A preliminary response will be drafted by the two theologians on the Commission, the Rev. Dr. Richard Leggett, Anglican, and the Rev. Dr. Allen Jorgenson, Lutheran, and brought to the April meeting.

The presence of and contributions by The Rev. Dr. Sandra Beardsall, The United Church of Canada partner for the last several years, were noted with deep gratitude. Sorry that her term has expired, The Commission sent her on her way with affection and blessings, just as members have been blessed by her presence and her many contributions.

The Commission next meets in Ottawa in April 2009.

The Very Rev. Peter Wall, Anglican Church of Canada
Bishop Michael Pryse, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Co-Chairs, Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission