



The Waterloo Declaration

Called to Full Communion (The Waterloo Declaration) as approved by the National Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. Waterloo, Ontario, 2001.

Introduction

In John 17:20-21, our Lord prayed that Christians might all be one so that the world might believe in Christ through the witness of our unity. The 20th century has given rise to an increase of movements which seek to give visible expression to this prayer. Christians have begun to see the fulfillment of Jesus' words as they unite in action to address the needs of local and global communities. The churches themselves have entered into partnerships at every level, from the neighbourhood to the world, through councils of churches, theological dialogues, and covenants which have fostered greater understanding in the search for common witness and visible unity. All these steps have moved us towards a healing of ancient divisions, including those which occurred during the 16th century in Europe.

Lutherans and Anglicans are graced in that we can respond to this prayer for unity without having experienced formal separation from one another. We share a common heritage as catholic churches of the Reformation. Despite our previous geographic, linguistic and cultural differences, in recent years we have discovered in one another a shared faith and spirituality. This discovery has called us into a search for more visible unity in mission and ministry.

On the international scene, the Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Consultative Council have participated in a number of formal discussions since 1970. These conversations were encouraged by the international multilateral consensus document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (Faith and Order, WCC, 1982)*. In 1987 an international Lutheran Anglican consultation on episcopacy was held in Niagara. From this gathering some specific recommendations were directed to the churches for their discussion. Consideration of these recommendations led in northern Europe to *The Porvoo Common Statement (1993)*, and in the United States to the *Concordat of Agreement (1997)*.

In 1983 Canadian Lutherans and Anglicans met to discuss the implications for the churches in Canada of the ongoing dialogue between Lutherans and Episcopalians in the United States. From this meeting emerged the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Dialogue (CLAD), whose first series of meetings led to the publication of its *Report and Recommendations, (April 1986)*. This report gave impetus to the desire of the two churches to produce an agreement which could provide a basis for the sharing of the eucharist between our churches.

A second series of discussions (CLAD II) resulted in the agreement Interim Sharing of the Eucharist, which was approved in 1989 by the National Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and by the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. In that agreement, we

- agreed to live in a relationship of interim eucharistic sharing;
- acknowledged one another as churches in which the Gospel is preached and taught;
- committed ourselves to share a common life in mission and service, to pray for and with one another, and to share resources.

The experience of six years of interim eucharistic sharing led the two churches in 1995 to take further steps towards full communion. The National Convention and the General Synod renewed the Interim Eucharistic Sharing Agreement until 2001 and further agreed

- to request all neighbouring congregations to undertake joint projects and celebrate the eucharist together annually;
- to receive one another's lay members, when moving from one church to the other with the same status (baptized/communicant/confirmed) which they held in their first church;
- to foster the development and implementation of agreements which permit an ordained minister (priest or pastor) to serve the people of both churches, including presiding at the sacraments of the Church, wherever, and according to whichever rite, the local bishop of each church deems appropriate ;
- to develop structures with the purpose of evaluating and improving the bishop's ministry through collegial and periodic review;
- to call for our two churches to move towards full communion by 2001.

Our two churches are using the following definition of Full Communion.

"Full communion is understood as a relationship between two distinct churches or communions in which each maintains its own autonomy while recognizing the catholicity and apostolicity of the other, and believing the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith. In such a relationship, communicant members of each church would be able freely to communicate at the altar of the other, and there would be freedom of ordained ministers to officiate sacramentally in either church. Specifically, in our context, we understand this to include transferability of members; mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries; freedom to use each other's liturgies; freedom to participate in each other's ordinations and installations of clergy, including bishops; and structures for consultation to express, strengthen, and enable our common life, witness, and service, to the glory of God and the salvation of the world."

In 1997, the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Council of General Synod each agreed that they were prepared to view the historic episcopate in the context of

apostolicity articulated in Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (paras. 29, 34-38, 51-53), The Niagara Report (paras. 53, 94), and The Porvoo Common Statement (paras. 34-57).

In that same year, the National Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada agreed that it was “prepared to take the constitutional steps necessary to understand the installation of bishops as ordination”.

In a spirit of thanksgiving for what God has already accomplished in us, and with confidence and hope for what God has prepared for the whole Church, we believe we can now act in visible witness to the unity which is ours in Jesus Christ. We are taking the next step in our common pilgrimage of faith in the belief that it will be of service to a greater unity.

Therefore, we, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada make the following acknowledgements, affirmations, declarations and commitments:

A. Acknowledgements

We acknowledge that in each church “the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel” (Augsburg Confession VII), that in each church “the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments ... duly ministered according to Christ’s ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.” (Article XIX of The Thirty-Nine Articles), although “we recognize that the Church stands in constant need of reform and renewal” (The Niagara Report, para 67).

We acknowledge that both our churches share in the common confession of the apostolic faith. (Report and Recommendations, CLAD I, 1986)

We acknowledge that personal, collegial and communal oversight (episcopate) is embodied and exercised in both churches in a variety of forms, in continuity of apostolic life, mission and ministry. (The Porvoo Common Statement, 1993)

We acknowledge that one another’s ordained ministries are given by God as instruments of divine grace and as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ’s commission through his body, the Church (An Appeal to all Christian People, Lambeth Conference, 1920); and that these ministries are the gifts of God’s Spirit to equip the people of God for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12).

We acknowledge that the episcopal office is valued and maintained in both our churches as a visible sign expressing and serving the Church’s unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry. (The Porvoo Common Statement, 1993)

B. Affirmations

In the light of the above acknowledgements, we make the following affirmations:

The Anglican Church of Canada hereby recognizes the full authenticity of the ordained ministries of bishops and pastors presently existing within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, acknowledging its pastors as priests in the Church of God and its bishops as bishops and chief pastors exercising a ministry of episcopate over the jurisdictional areas of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in which they preside.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada hereby recognizes the full authenticity of the ordained ministries of bishops, priests, and deacons presently existing within the Anglican Church of Canada, acknowledging its priests as pastors in the Church of God and its bishops as bishops and chief pastors exercising a ministry of episcopate over the jurisdictional areas of the Anglican Church of Canada in which they preside.

The Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada affirm each other's expression of episcopal ministry as a sign of continuity and unity in apostolic faith. We thus understand that the bishops of both churches are ordained for life service of the Gospel in the pastoral ministry of the historic episcopate, although tenure in office may be terminated by retirement, resignation or conclusion of term, subject to the constitutional provisions of the respective churches.

C. Declaration of Full Communion

We declare the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada to be in full communion.

D. Commitments

As churches in full communion, we now commit ourselves:

- to welcome persons ordained in either of our churches to the office of bishop, priest/pastor or deacon to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination;
- to invite one another's bishops to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church, and to invite pastors and priests to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of pastors or priests in each other's churches;
- to consult with one another regarding developments in our understanding of the ministry of all the baptized, including the ordained ministry;
- to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry;
- to establish appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order, mission and service;
- to encourage regular consultation and collaboration among members of our churches at all levels, to promote the formulation and adoption of covenants for common work in mission

and ministry, and to facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information on theological, pastoral, and mission matters;

- to establish a Joint Commission to nurture our growth in communion, to coordinate the implementation of this Declaration, and report to the decision-making bodies of both our churches;
- to hold joint meetings of national, regional and local decision-making bodies wherever practicable, and
- to continue to work together for the full visible unity of the whole Church of God.

Conclusion

We rejoice in our Declaration as an expression of the visible unity of our churches in the one Body of Christ. We are ready to be co-workers with God in whatever tasks of mission serve the Gospel. We give glory to God for the gift of unity already ours in Christ, and we pray for the fuller realization of this gift in the entire Church.

Signed by the National Bishop of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Primate of The Anglican Church of Canada

Wording in sections A.2, 3, 4, 5; and C.1, 2, 3, 4, 5 is derived from The Porvoo Common Statement (October, 1992) © David Tustin and Tore Furberg. Published in 1993 by Church House Publishing for the Council for Christian Unity of the General Synod of the Church of England.

Wording in section B is derived from Concordat of Agreement between the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, rev. January 1997, published for study by the Office of Ecumenical Relations of the Episcopal Church.

(Anglican Church of Canada posting of Waterloo Declaration and commentary)