

The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations

CONTENTS

- A. Membership**
 - B. Introduction**
 - C. National Consultation on Ecclesiology**
 - D. Churches in Full Communion**
 - Old Catholic Churches
 - Mar Thoma Church and Churches of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan
 - Philippine Independent Church
 - Resolution #A027: Philippine Independent Church
 - E. Official Dialogues**
 - Anglican-Methodist
 - Anglican-Oriental Orthodox
 - Anglican-Orthodox
 - Resolution #A028: *Filioque*
 - Episcopal-Russian Orthodox Joint Coordinating Committee
 - Anglican-Roman Catholic
 - Consultation on Church Union
 - Resolution #A029: Consultation on Church Union
 - Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee
 - Resolution #A030: Lutheran-Episcopal Concordat of Agreement
 - North American Anglican-Old Catholic Working Group
 - Episcopal-Reformed Episcopal
 - Resolution #A031: Reformed Episcopal Church
 - F. Participation in Councils of Churches**
 - National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
 - World Council of Churches
 - G. Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers**
 - H. Financial Report**
 - I. Proposed Budget for the Triennium**
 - Resolution #A032: Proposed Resolution for Budget Appropriation
- Appendix: Episcopal Church Representatives**

A. MEMBERSHIP

Bishops

- The Rt. Rev. A. Theodore Eastman
- The Rt. Rev. Harry W. Shipps
- The Rt. Rev. Orris G. Walker, Jr.
- The Rt. Rev. Vincent W. Warner, Jr.

The Rt. Rev. Roger J. White
The Rt. Rev. Arthur B. Williams, Jr.

Presbyters

The Rev. Ashton J. Brooks
The Rev. Julia M. Gatta
The Very Rev. Robert E. Giannini
The Rev. Rena Karefa-Smart
The Rev. Charles H. Long, Jr.
The Rev. Patricia Wilson-Kastner

Lay Persons

Mrs. Glennes T. Clifford
Dr. E. Rozanne Elder
Mrs. Harriet Kollin
Dr. Robert Bruce Mullin
Ms. Dorothy Rose

Adjunct

The Rev. Richard Townley, Jr., President EDEO

Assisting Staff

The Rev. William A. Norgren, Ecumenical Officer
The Rev. Christopher M. Agnew, Associate Ecumenical Officer
The Rev. J. Robert Wright, Consultant to the Ecumenical Office

B. INTRODUCTION

The responsibilities of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (SCER) are described as follows in Canon I.1.2(n)(3):

- To develop a comprehensive and coordinated policy and strategy on relations between this Church and other Churches.
- To make recommendations to General Convention concerning interchurch cooperation and unity.
- To carry out such instructions on ecumenical matters as may be given it from time to time by the General Convention.
- To nominate for appointment by the Presiding Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, persons to serve on the governing bodies of ecumenical organizations to which this Church belongs by action of the General Convention and to participate in major conferences as convened by such organizations.

The 70th General Convention, meeting in July 1991, adopted the following agenda for the Commission for the ensuing triennium:

1. That the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations sponsor a focused consultation on ecclesiology that will bring together theologians, representatives of other dialogue partners, members of the Faith and Order units of the World Council of Churches and the National Council of the Churches of Christ, and the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers.
2. That the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations request an explicit examination of ecclesiology in each of our dialogues and encourage exchange of information and experience among them.
3. That the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations invite the cooperation of the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers in challenging and assisting the Church at diocesan and parish levels to test issues of ecclesiology against actual experience and in order that the Church's local life may more intentionally reflect her ecclesiology and that her ecclesiology may be sharpened by her actual experience.

The Consultation on Ecclesiology was held, as projected, in Riverdale, New York, October 17-21, 1993. Participants included 18 persons from Orthodox, Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches. Anglicans numbered 43, including the SCER and the Executive Committee of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers. Their findings are summarized in the report which follows, along with accounts of progress made in other areas of the Commission's responsibility: churches in full communion, bilateral dialogues, multilateral conversations, participation in the conciliar movement, and local ecumenism.

C. NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON ECCLESIOLOGY

Report

The Episcopal Church's "Declaration on Unity," adopted by General Convention in 1979, widely received in the life of this Church, reflected in its ecumenical conversations, and reaffirmed by the General Convention in 1988, describes in its opening paragraph a vision of mission in visible unity.¹

The visible unity we seek will be one eucharistic fellowship. As an expression of and a means toward this goal, the uniting Church will recognize itself as a communion of Communions, based upon acknowledgment of catholicity and apostolicity. In this organic relationship all will recognize each other's members and ministries. All will share the bread and the cup of the Lord. All will acknowledge each other as belonging to the Body of Christ at all places and at all times. All will proclaim the Gospel to the world with one mind and purpose. All will serve the needs of humankind

¹ "Visible unity is that which someone outside the church can see." Henry Chadwick.

with mutual trust and dedication. And for these ends all will plan and decide together in assemblies constituted by authorized representatives whenever and wherever there is need.

The emphasis on *koinonia* or communion emanating from the 1993 Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order at Santiago de Compostela was already present in this Declaration. As more churches incorporate the meaning of Santiago de Compostela, the Episcopal Church will be encouraged to spell out the implications of what is already present in its own Declaration.

This National Consultation on Ecclesiology met just fifteen years after the 1978 National Consultation on Ecumenism originated the Declaration. Briefly stated, the task was to review the 1979 Declaration and then to look again at Anglican and ecumenical understandings of the Church, what it is and does. The agenda was to probe the particular questions raised in the remaining three paragraphs of the Declaration (see below).

The Consultation theme—"Ecumenism of the Possible: Witness, Theology and the Future Church"—provoked questions of its own. In the opening address, Henry Chadwick challenged the participants: "What believers need, and what in their best moments they want, is an ecumenism of the impossible—an achievement of communion which, with truth and integrity, has actually dismantled the old obstacles inherited from the past." Finally, no absolute choice seemed possible. On the one hand, we are tempted by an ecumenical idealism that prefers to wait until all things are exactly as we would have them, with the result that we retreat from committing ourselves to each other as we are. On the other hand, we are tempted by an ecumenical pragmatism that prefers to settle for coexistence and cooperation with the result that the vision is lost. The Consultation drew us on to ask what steps we should take now toward the second decade of the next century (2020) to move toward the vision described in the Declaration.

SHARP DIFFERENCES/FIRM INTENTION

The reports of the Working Groups sought to describe the ecumenical situation at this time.

As a result of our deliberations in this national consultation, we are *firm in our intention* to remain in dialogue and participate in the renewal and revisioning of the ecumenical movement. We recognize, nevertheless, many *sharp differences* with our dialogue partners and have a host of unanswered questions about the way forward in ecumenism. We foresee a number of ecumenical possibilities as we move into the first decades of the 21st century. We have also set these over against a sobering list of areas that provide obstacles to the furthering of dialogue and ecumenical participation in life and mission with some or all partners. Finally, as we consider both possibilities and obstacles we have several specific recommendations that we commend as immediate opportunities to realize the possibilities and overcome obstacles.

We focused on current tensions between gratitude for the theological achievements of the past fifteen years and despair at the paucity of concrete realizations of those

achievements liturgically, pastorally, and juridically, at every level of Christian life. We recognize that the ecumenical achievements of the immediate past have now been surrounded by new secular and Christian dynamics: a need for greater diversity and inclusivity of all God's children (for which we are profoundly grateful) and other dynamics of our national life that are a cause for concern, such as suspicion of national structures, regionalism, individualism, and finally fear of the loss of Christian particularity, a fear that itself results from the ecumenical successes of the recent past.

We must always keep in mind the prophetic as well as the possible, and hold to a vision of *koinonia* in its largest sense that will include the whole body of Christians.

ECCLESIAL INSTITUTIONS

Questions about ecclesial institutions and their authority are raised by the second paragraph of the Declaration on Unity.

We do not yet see the shape of that collegiality, conciliarity, authority and primacy which need to be present and active in the Diocese with its Parishes as well as nationally, regionally, universally; but we recognize that some ecclesial structure will be necessary to bring about the expressions of our unity in the Body of Christ described above.

Some illustrative, though very partial signs of movement toward the vision of the Declaration were identified:

"One eucharistic fellowship...a communion of communions" has been set forth as the goal of visible unity by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. Some examples may help to illustrate this vision: the full communion of Anglican Provinces with the Old Catholic, Philippine Independent, Mar Thoma, and united Churches of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, which now seek fuller means to share in mission; another example is the Roman Catholic Church composed of the Western Church with its many religious orders and the Eastern Catholic Churches. The proposed Lutheran-Episcopal Concordat of Agreement is a possible future example. Also suggestive for understanding the phrase "communion of Communion" is the recent agreement on Christology by representatives of the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox (non-Chalcedonian) Churches. And, in a different way, the partnership of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Episcopal Church for practical cooperation and dialogue is instructive.

Obstacles on our path in the area of ecclesial institutions were identified:

The terms collegiality, conciliarity, authority, and primacy highlight a problem for our ecumenical partners and indeed many of our Anglican participants. The questions of "Where is the center of authority for Anglicans?" and "What is the

relationship of official statements to the life of the community?" have marked our discussion. Thus our partners sometimes wonder to whom they are talking. Our "dispersed authority" is in some ways admired, but its exercise is confusing. Although there have always been parties in Anglicanism, something seems to have changed: autonomy seems to have taken precedence over unity, collegiality is strained. This may be seen in the contradictory public statements made by bishops even of the same Province. It is also seen operating between Provinces. This raises questions of how dedicated we Anglicans are to unity with one another.

Difficulties surround the absence of common methods of and mechanisms for reaching decisions within and between traditions or denominations that at once are the result of our long-standing divisions as well as presently a cause of disunity.

The Episcopal Church's particular ordering of ministries for the mission of the Church, including the historic episcopate, is seen by some churches as an obstacle.

A historical principle is not to multiply structures beyond necessity. The recommendations suggest the necessity of structures of authority and ask that their exercise be clarified, particularly collegiality, conciliarity, and primacy in the Church.

- A-1 The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations should initiate a study of the Anglican exercise of collegiality, conciliarity, and primacy within the diocese, nation/province, and globally both as practiced and as it might become in the service of ecumenical mission; including attention to conversations relative to primacy in the ecumenical movement itself; and refer the results of such study to the Episcopal Church's dialogue partners, the Anglican Consultative Council, the General Convention, and the accredited seminaries of the Episcopal Church.
- A-2 The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations should receive and employ "apostolicity," as that term has received new explication in major ecumenical documentation, as a critical principle in forwarding the ecumenical enterprise.
- A-3 The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations should initiate a process by which the results of the World Conference on Faith and Order at Santiago de Compostela may be received in the Episcopal Church with particular reference to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in *koinonia*/communion.
- A-4 In order to mitigate obstacles and to foster growth toward full visible unity, the Episcopal Church should be urged to help its ecumenical partners to understand how its polity safeguards the unity of faith in the Church and its continuity with the faith of the apostles, to help its partners to understand that Anglican unity need not be damaged by increasing diversity of its liturgies worldwide, and to help its partners to understand that its

ecumenical relationships moving toward full communion manifest a consistent ecclesiology.

- A-5 In order to mitigate obstacles and to foster growth toward full visible unity, the Roman Catholic Church should be urged to clarify the requirements for full eucharistic fellowship with the Anglican Communion, to address the ambiguities in its theory and practice of the relationship between primacy and collegiality, to respond to the criticisms of the reasons it adduces against the ordination of women, to reopen discussion of the question of Anglican orders in light of ARC-USA's case that a new context for this issue now exists, and to insure that the tone of its ecumenical documents conveys its eagerness for reconciliation and its sorrow over the continuing division.
- A-6 Since so many of these ecumenical issues center on authority, its uses and abuses, in the next twenty years we should seek to clarify the nature of authority in our church and to seek the same from our Roman Catholic partners.

MAINTAINING, DEVELOPING AND SHARING TRADITIONS

The question about how particular Christian traditions will be maintained, developed and shared is raised by the third paragraph of the Declaration. Raised here also is the question about how Communion will be shaped for mission in pluralistic America which is inseparable from tradition.

We do not yet know how the particular traditions of each of the Communion will be maintained and developed for the enrichment of the whole Church. We do not see how the Church will be shaped by the particular histories and cultures within which she is called to fulfill her mission.

Appreciation of the positive developments coming from the dialogues was voiced:

We record our appreciation for the ecumenical successes of the last fifteen years, chief among them the bilateral conversations. The bilaterals have allowed us to move theologically closer to the reality of a communion of Communion and have provided a place where the churches have come to know one another and thereby to know themselves better. In addition, we are encouraged by the recent breakthroughs of bilaterals in other countries, particularly the Lutheran-Methodist achievement of full communion in Germany. Our enthusiasm is tempered, however, by a recognition that obstacles continue to surface despite—and in part because of—this progress. In frank discussion this week with our ecumenical partners, we have been able clearly to discern certain of the obstacles that block our way toward becoming "one eucharistic fellowship...a communion of Communion."

Obstacles on our way in the area of traditions were identified:

While the proposed Concordat with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shows great promise, there are fears among some Lutherans that the consummation of full communion with the Episcopal Church could bring the ELCA a step closer to Rome. Even among some supportive Lutheran bishops there is a conviction that there is too much on the agenda of their newly merged church to allow them to give adequate attention to the proposed Concordat. A further potential barrier is the determination of the ELCA to deal with the proposed agreement with the Episcopal Church at the same time as they vote on a similar proposal involving the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, and the Reformed Church in America, a linkage that in the mind of some complicates and perhaps even compromises both agreements.² On the Episcopal side, the proposed suspension of the Preface to the Ordination Rites is a principal cause for alarm to some.

Among the major ecclesiological obstacles that have emerged since 1979 in our relationship with the Roman Catholic Church are the debate over the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate, the Vatican Response to the ARCIC Final Report, and certain exercises of primatial authority in the Roman Catholic Church.

The many recommendations in this area highlight the importance of recognizing the various dialogue structures as institutional means or instruments for maintaining, developing, and sharing the Christian traditions globally, locally, and nationally. Dialogues have also been recognized as expressions of the degree of communion that already exists.

B-1 The obstacles in the area of Lutheran relationships can be overcome, we believe, by the development of a thoroughgoing educational process by the Lutheran - Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee. It is vital that this process be implemented fully at every decision-making level in each church. While we await a decision on the Concordat of Agreement, there is still much that we can accomplish together in the mission of the Church, specifically in the areas of stewardship, evangelism, formation, peace, justice, and integrity of creation. We recommend in each area that concrete educational programs be consciously undertaken.

B-2 In order to eliminate obstacles and to foster our growth toward the goal of full visible unity, both the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion should be invited to clarify the adequacy of the method of ARCIC, avoiding the polemical language of the past and seeking clearly to express our common faith, to clarify the official processes of reception of agreed statements and their policy implications, to develop habits of mutual consultation so as to avoid inadvertently causing further pain and division,

²But see "The Implications of Concordat of Agreement and A Common Calling." Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1993.

and to coordinate the various levels of their individual bilateral relationships, i.e. the local ARCs, national ARCs, and ARCIC.

- B-3** Both United Methodists and Presbyterians are fearful of our possible withdrawal from the Consultation on Church Union. Such a withdrawal could, they suggest, remove a needed catholic emphasis from the endeavor, could diminish the enthusiasm of other participants in the Consultation for future bilateral conversations with the Episcopal Church, and could send a negative signal in particular to Methodists, who share a common history with us. In light of these concerns, it is very important that the Episcopal Church's final response to the Consultation on Church Union proposals be crafted in such a way as to leave the door open to further developments that could lead toward full communion with the participating churches. Our response should be developed in consultation with those churches themselves as a sign of our continuing commitment to them.
- B-4** We are also very aware of the partners not yet enlisted in ecumenical dialogue to the extent that partners present at this meeting are. Here we think particularly of the historic black churches and the Pentecostals. As in all the dialogues of the past, dialogues with these churches would appropriately be accompanied with acknowledgment of the hubris on our part that has delayed this recognition of oneness in Christ far too long.
- B-5** The number of bilateral dialogues should be increased as (a) a means of forwarding real knowledge and appreciation of traditions other than our own and (b) an expression of our intention to live into unity while acting together in mission.
- B-6** The Episcopal Church, through its Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, should invite the partner churches with the help of the National Council of Churches' Faith and Order to initiate and forward a forum to correlate the various ecumenical dialogues in the USA.
- B-7** We should support growing understanding, through educational efforts by the Episcopal Church and partners in dialogue, of elements within our traditions that envision the necessity of ecumenical engagement, and a more conscious and conscientious ecumenical formation of seminarians, clergy, and laity. In this connection, it is especially important to discern and incorporate the gifts and insights of the young.
- B-8** We rejoice in the accomplishments that have been made in the last fourteen years, especially in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* and Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue, and urge that we build on these in the future.
- B-9** We urge that we explore the concepts of *koinonia* and *metanoia* and the newly discovered importance of reception.

B-10 Together with our ecumenical partners we are discovering resources that lead us to greater understanding of one another's spirituality, sacramental life, and notions of holiness. Our questions of theology must be related to the spiritual ethos of our different traditions and how we live out our life in Christ. We can recommend nothing that would advance our sense of common life in Christ with our partners more than a commitment to become better acquainted with this spiritual dimension, a commitment extending to every level of our communities of faith, from the grassroots of local parishes through seminary communities to the highest decision-making agencies. While this mutual exploration of one another's spiritualities would be very productive with free churches as well as liturgical ones, the process would probably be different. It is not necessary that every dialogue follow the same route.

Mission and Interdependence

The question and challenge to Christians and their Communion in paragraph four is to "move from present interrelatedness to interdependence" by pursuing the church's mission together:

All Christians are challenged to express more fully among themselves the biblical call to mutual responsibility and interdependence. We believe ways can now be found to express this call to a communion of the Churches in the Body of Christ. As the Churches become partners in the mission they will move from present interrelatedness to interdependence.

Obstacles to movement in this area were cited:

Problems surround the partnership of women and men in the life and mission of the Church, including questions for ecumenical partners that surround the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate in the Episcopal Church.

Ethical concerns or problems exist, sometimes crossing the boundaries of tradition or denomination, especially those in the general area of race, gender, age, and environment, but immediately in the area of sexuality and specifically questions surrounding the ordination of practicing homosexuals and the blessing of same-sex unions. The means by which we apprehend the understanding and exercise of authority in particular churches are often themselves an obstacle.

Recommendations describe ways to discover common mission locally and its links with the church throughout the world as the way for Communion to move from present inter-relatedness to interdependence.

- C-1 The rich fruits of the reception of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* are already evident. More could be done in the area of baptism, as suggested by Sister Lorelei Fuchs, SA:

Could not the churches take further steps together now which would enable Christians to mutually find, recognize, and experience fuller *koinonia* in life via baptismal practice? For example, can the churches design and implement a common baptismal preparation program in which formation and apostolic service of candidates, parents, sponsors, and congregations are shared on the basis of ecumenical convergence and separated only when denominational discipline requires? Could more churches more globally take the step to issue a common baptismal certificate, acknowledging one baptism into the body of Christ via celebration in a particular church? Could the churches devise common liturgical texts for a common rite of baptism to express liturgical reception of the notion that it is one common baptism shared by Christians? Could churches look towards a common celebration of Christian baptism?

In the light of this convergence, a beginning point could be comparative study at every level of the ecclesiology implicit in the texts of baptismal liturgies.

- C-2 We recommend the mutual exploration and initiation of practical ways in which the Episcopal Church and ecumenical partners at the local or even congregational level can affirm our one baptism as well as the implication of our baptismal covenant for joint catechesis and formation and, in so doing, realize more deeply this most basic element of the Church's *koinonia*.
- C-3 Reform is needed on diocesan and national levels of the Episcopal Church to bring together the ecumenical (unitive) and missional (worship, evangelism, and service) agencies of the Church that would (a) better fulfill our understanding of the mission of the Church as found in the Book of Common Prayer's Catechism,³ (b) give us concrete ways of inviting or accepting invitations of ecumenical partners to live our way into shared mission, and (c) recognize and promote already existing ecumenical attitudes and practices occurring in various localities.
- C-4 We should take into account the appearance of new groupings of denominations within the United States based upon full communion or,

³"The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ." "The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love." p. 855

indeed, other specific expressions of unity short of full communion (e.g., Disciples of Christ-United Church of Christ, Philippine Independent Church-Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America-Episcopal Church).

- C-5 Further development of regional covenanting agreements is needed (e.g., Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic, Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic-Methodist).
- C-6 Lifting of past anathemas, or condemnations and addressing conflicts between or among churches is a practical exercise of and witness to mutual forgiveness as a condition and symbol of unity.
- C-7 We recommend development of ecumenical language, based on common theological effort, that has a capacity to be received especially by the hierarchies of the churches as well as the laity. In this we see the possibility of a commitment to find new ways to talk about persistent problems and concerns between churches that vex progress toward unity in life and mission.
- C-8 The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations should generate (with elucidation) a list of criteria for understanding and applying in ecumenical dialogue and engagement the term "interdependence." The elucidations should include some treatment of the relationship between the concepts of ecclesial "autonomy" and "unity."

THE ECUMENICAL FUTURE

We offer three metaphors to describe the shape of our continuing ecumenical venture for the next twenty years.

PILGRIMAGE: This metaphor suggests that we decamp from the Slough of Despond and continue a common life, on a common road, toward a common goal, talking, eating, and growing together on the way (cf. Luke 24).

THE TABLE: This metaphor underlies the centrality of both Eucharist and inclusivity in our pilgrim journey. Here we reaffirm the first paragraph of the Declaration on Unity: "The visible unity we seek will be one eucharistic fellowship....All will share the bread and cup of the Lord."

THE WEDDING FEAST: With this metaphor we wish to underline the model of abundance that could guide us in this era of a more comprehensive ecumenical enterprise. We wish also by means of this metaphor to signal the chain of relationships through which our ecumenical partners' relatives will become our own.

Priorities Raised

A small group formed spontaneously to discuss and raise priorities for the period immediately ahead, but these were not intended to compromise the Episcopal Church's established policy to press toward visible unity with the whole Christian fellowship, that is with the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox and Protestant churches.

P-1 Pursue Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue proposals to a successful conclusion. The process should include at least one multilateral consultation of Lutherans, Episcopalians, Orthodox and Roman Catholics.

P-2 Deepen *relationships* with Protestant partners through

- **new dialogues with churches in the Consultation on Church Union**
- **worship and action together locally**
- **serious attention to relationships with evangelical, holiness and pentecostal churches not now in conciliar structures or in projected dialogues. A participant from the Reformed Episcopal Church suggested that his church could form a bridge to many evangelical bodies.**

P-3 Promote the growth of ecumenical education and leadership formation, starting with

- **youth events and inter-seminary experiences**
- **more support to the network of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers for this purpose**
- **new "Living Room Dialogues" type of publication for adult study.**

D. CHURCHES IN FULL COMMUNION

Old Catholic Churches

The Episcopal Church's longest standing relationship of full communion with other churches, dating from 1934 and 1940 and based upon the Bonn Concordat of 1931, is with the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. A means to strengthen and preserve and augment this relationship has been the International Conference of Anglican and Old Catholic Theologians, which held its fourteenth meeting at Guildford, England, in September 1993. It is jointly sponsored by the Anglican Consultative Council and the International Old Catholic Bishops' Conference. Co-chaired by the Old Catholic Bishop of Germany and the Bishop of Repton in England, the Guildford conference included

representatives of Old Catholic Churches from the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Poland, and Germany, as well as representative theologians from the Anglican world.

The purpose of the Guildford meeting was to probe Anglican and Old Catholic understandings of themselves as churches in full communion, and the implications this may have for greater cooperation in common mission, especially in view of the new developments in Europe. Matters touched on in the report are proposals for common mission in geographically overlapping areas, the possibility of shared episcopal oversight and pastoral care in some cases, a common theological response to questions of concern in both churches, a deepening of the agreement in faith that is briefly summarized in the Bonn Concordat, the meaning of "full communion," collegiality of decision-making, relations with other ecumenical partners, the new crisis in Eastern Europe, and "the danger of thinking in purely European terms."

Mar Thoma Church and Churches of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan

The Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, with congregations in the USA, has an agreement with the Presiding Bishop and House of Bishops about assistance to Mar Thoma people. The united Church of South India also has congregations in the USA, for which the Moderator-bishop has recently assumed responsibility. The united Churches of North India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan have no congregations in the USA of which we are aware. The united churches are part of the world Primates Meeting, Anglican Consultative Council, and Lambeth Conference.

Philippine Independent Church

Since the Philippine Episcopal Church became an autonomous Province of the Anglican Communion in 1990, the Episcopal Church in the USA has been in communion with two churches in the Philippines. On the one hand, the Episcopal Church's concern is only with the activities of the Philippine Independent Church in the USA and not with its activities outside our own jurisdiction. On the other hand, whatever we do in this country must be done with the knowledge, if not the concurrence, of the Philippine Episcopal Church.

The Council of the Philippine Independent Church and the Episcopal Church in the United States, established by earlier agreement, met in July 1993 at the invitation of the Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning. Those present included the Presiding Bishop, the newly elected Obispo Maximo Alberto Ramento, and the Rt. Rev. Vic Esclamado, Philippine Independent bishop in the United States and Canada. In the discussion of various issues it became increasingly clear that the time has come for the two churches to formulate a new joint mission statement, building on the 1961 Concordat of full communion but focusing specifically on the work of the two churches in the USA and the unique situations they face.

The SCER continues to urge that all appropriate efforts be made to encourage, assist, and cooperate with the Philippine Independent Church in their efforts to minister to and evangelize Filipinos residing in the United States. We further recommend that members of the Episcopal Church welcome and befriend Bishop Esclamado and work with him so that

THE BLUE BOOK

the two churches can clarify issues of pastoral and ecclesiastical concern and minister together in the name of Christ within our parallel jurisdictions.

Resolution #A027

Philippine Independent Church

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of ____ concurring, **That the 71st General Convention request the**
- 2 **Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church to invite the Obispo Maximo of the**
- 3 **Philippine Independent Church to join him in authorizing the Joint Council of the**
- 4 **two churches to prepare a new Joint Statement of Mission (based on the 1961**
- 5 **Concordat) to advance the interests of mutual responsibility between the two churches**
- 6 **in the USA.**

E. OFFICIAL DIALOGUES

Anglican-Methodist

Although there have been some dialogues between Anglicans and Methodists (and even an ill-fated effort toward merger in England), no international dialogue had taken place until the Anglican-Methodist International Commission met in 1992. In 1988 the Lambeth Conference regretted the absence of such a dialogue, and the World Methodist Council's Executive Committee accepted the invitation to begin one. Two meetings, the first in Jerusalem in 1992 and the second in Dublin in 1993, produced much conversation, companionship, and a document which identifies the goal of movement toward full communion. "Sharing in the Apostolic Communion," an Interim Report, has been released for study and comment.

The various Provinces of the Anglican Communion and the member churches of the World Methodist Council received the Report; a period of one or two years will be allowed for study and comment, to be referred back to the Commission. The Commission will then need to decide whether another round of revision seems a profitable approach, and/or if the work of the Commission might in some form be continued. Suggestions will need to be made for appropriate action and guidance.

Two vexing issues, which have been touched on but need much further exploration, might be expressed as questions we have for each other. Methodists to Anglicans: "Do you really take mission seriously or are you too wrapped up in your ecclesiastical concerns?" Anglicans to Methodists: "Do you take the threefold apostolic ministry, as historically exercised in the Church, seriously as a crucial and continuing part of our heritage?" These are the questions attendant to our separation, and they are still a part of our conversations. As we include further perspectives from various parts of our global memberships, those questions may, however, take on a different significance or may sometimes be less central than other concerns.

In 1991 the General Convention authorized a dialogue between the Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1992 the Methodist Episcopal-Episcopal Dialogue met in Washington, D.C. The agenda explored the distinctive histories

of each of the four churches in America, their forms of worship, and their Wesleyan and Anglican traditions. By and large we know little about each other's life and the issues that confront us in mission. If this situation is to change, it was recognized that congregations will need new resources. Changes in personnel in two of the churches led the ecumenical officers to defer a 1993 meeting in favor of a future smaller meeting to develop strategies and activities aimed at continuing dialogue and increasing our capacity to share life and mission locally and nationally as part of our pursuit of visible unity.

Anglican-Oriental Orthodox

The Anglican-Oriental Orthodox Consultation met in November 1993 at the Episcopal Church Center in New York. Present were five clergy from two Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Armenian Church of America and the Syrian Orthodox Church. The meeting was marked by a spirit of interest and Christian fellowship. Presentations included "Armenian Religious Art" by the Rev. G. Kochakian, "Summary of Christological Discussions" by the Rev. J. Robert Wright, "Past and Future Areas and Methods of Cooperation" by the Rev. Arten Ashjian and the Rev. John R. Kevern, and "The Episcopal Church House of Bishops' current Work on the Episcopate" by Bishop Harry W. Shippo.

Future discussions will focus on pastoral and local mutual assistance, theological issues related to Christology, terminology common to the Oriental Orthodox, pneumatological considerations, pastoral implications of mixed marriages, and exchange of educational publications.

Anglican-Orthodox

Planning for the first meeting in the triennium of the Anglican-Orthodox Theological Consultation came to an end with the suspension of the dialogue by Archbishop Iakovos and the Synod of Bishops of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, announced in a letter to the Presiding Bishop in June 1991. The letter gave no particulars, but ordination of women and ordination of active homosexual persons were mentioned in news releases. The letter was shared at the 1991 General Convention where much concern was expressed but no action was taken for lack of particulars. At the same time, a resolution was adopted, calling for inter-Anglican and ecumenical dialogue on human sexuality (B020).

The Presiding Bishop and Archbishop Iakovos met the following October, when the latter expressed his sadness at the obstacles placed in the way of his long-held hope for recognition of Anglican orders. In a public statement the two leaders commented that to remain faithful to the central task of Christian unity, churches must not simply address issues separately but must consult each other about their understandings. Soon afterwards, the suspension was confirmed at a meeting of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas, and a special committee of Orthodox theologians was appointed to study the matter further and meet with a similar committee from the Episcopal Church. SCOPA commented that "Orthodox clergy and laity are sometimes scandalized by the image of the Episcopal Church in the media and our association with this image."

A joint meeting of the two committees waited until a year later, owing to an Orthodox decision to resolve first a parallel suspension of the Orthodox Churches' memberships in

THE BLUE BOOK

the National Council of Churches. After consideration of extensive concerns raised in both churches, the joint meeting prepared a draft statement recommending that the dialogue be resumed on a more realistic level and suggesting some principles for its conduct. The draft has been discussed, but the Orthodox have been reluctant about further meetings. Words written in 1979 by the Steering Committee of the now International Commission of Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue may also fit the U.S.: "Our conversations are concerned with the search for a unity in faith. They are not negotiations for immediate full communion. When this is understood the discovery of differences on various matters, though distressing, will be seen as a necessary step on the long road toward that unity which God wills for his Church."

The SCER received word from the Standing Liturgical Commission that it had prepared a resolution on the *Filioque* for the 71st General Convention. Since SCER had prepared a study and proposed the resolutions to the 68th General Convention on the subject, we are pleased to sponsor the new resolution together with the Standing Liturgical Commission.

Resolution #A028

Filioque

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 71st General Convention, following**
- 2 **the resolution of the 68th General Convention, and responding to Resolution 19 of the**
- 3 **joint meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion and the Anglican**
- 4 **Consultative Council (Capetown 1993), hereby reaffirm its intention to remove the**
- 5 **words "and the Son" from the third paragraph of the Nicene Creed at the next**
- 6 **revision of the Book of Common Prayer, and in the meantime permit the omission of**
- 7 **these words in congregations which so desire.**

EXPLANATION

The 68th General Convention passed a resolution expressing its intention to make this omission, subject to the endorsement and commendation of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Lambeth Conference. This has now happened, and Resolution 19 of the 1993 Capetown joint meeting requests responses from the member churches of the Anglican Communion to the request of Lambeth 1987 and 1988 and ACC-7 and ACC-8 that "in future liturgical revisions the Niceo-Constantinopolitan Creed be printed without the *Filioque* clause." This resolution is the response of the Episcopal Church, which does not imply rejection of the Western theological tradition.

Episcopal-Russian Orthodox Joint Coordinating Committee

Appointed by His Holiness Alexy II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and by the Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Church-Russian Orthodox Church Joint Coordinating Committee first met in April 1991 at the Danilov Monastery in Moscow. Its co-chairs are Archbishop Kliment of Kaluga and Borovsk and Bishop Roger White of Milwaukee.

The purpose of the Joint Coordinating Committee is (1) to facilitate the development of cooperation between the Episcopal Church and the Russian Orthodox Church and (2) to prepare practical proposals for such cooperation. The work of the Committee has rapidly become multifaceted, characterized by exchanges of seminarians, faculty, laity, bishops, clergy, staff people, and longer range parish-to-parish and diocese-to-diocese partnerships.

Meetings in April and October 1991, June 1992, and January and August 1993 have, for example, led to the support of Russian seminarians in substantial numbers through the work of SPCK, USA. National Church staff have exchanged experiences in such fields as communication and education, with the hope of expanding this to youth and social ministries. Support for a Moscow parish-based publication venture has been given by SPCK, USA. In St. Petersburg St. Xenia's Hospital for older persons has been renovated with the help of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, and other financial assistance has enabled the church to broadcast twice daily.

Patriarch Alexy II was welcomed at the Episcopal Church Center by the Presiding Bishop and was honored with a doctorate by the General Theological Seminary. Members of the Coordinating Committee and others have always been warmly received in Moscow by His Holiness and others. In all, a congenial and progressive relationship is well established. A delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church is expected at the 71st General Convention.

The first theological dialogue, on "Episcopal Ministry in the Church," was sponsored in June 1992, when six Episcopal bishops and theologians joined Russian bishops and theologians as well as the Coordinating Committee in Moscow to examine the theology of the episcopate and related issues in each church. The papers by Episcopalians are published in *On Being a Bishop*, The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1993.

Another dialogue, requested by the Russian Orthodox Church, is projected for 1994 or 1995 in the USA on "Evangelism and Christian Formation," to include laity, bishops and clergy of both churches.

The Joint Coordinating Committee will continue to enable Anglican-Orthodox partnership in mission. The generous response from the people and parishes of the Episcopal Church carries this work forward. The intention is to involve as many people as possible, emphasizing the wide range of practical assistance so desperately needed, while recognizing that Episcopalians have much to learn from the historic struggle of the Russian Orthodox Church and the new opportunities for the Gospel in Russia.

Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue

The Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation (ARC) between the Episcopal Church and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has met as a rule three times every two years since 1965. From time to time ARC has issued joint statements dealing with matters of common concern. These have been published chiefly in *Called to Full Unity*, edited by Joseph W. Witmer and J. Robert Wright (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1986).

During the 1992-1994 triennium ARC has focused attention on two such reports. The first was an evaluation of the responses to the ARCIC *Final Report* from the Lambeth Conference and the Roman See. At the 1988 Lambeth Conference, the bishops of the Communion officially judged that the ARCIC texts on the eucharist and ministry are

"consonant in substance with the faith of Anglicans" and that these statements can now be used pastorally and academically as examples of the doctrinal teaching of the Anglican Communion.

By contrast, in its 1991 response to the *Final Report*, the Vatican reached the conclusion that the texts on the eucharist and ministry still are not "consonant with the faith of the Catholic Church." In the authority area of the *Final Report*, Rome found only a certain convergence, "which is but a first step along a path that seeks consensus," and the Roman See stated its desire for more Anglican agreement on papal infallibility, apostolic succession, and the ultimate authority of the magisterium.

As a result of these official responses, in 1993 ARC issued an "Agreed Statement on the Lambeth and Vatican Responses to ARCIC I" (*Origins*, Vol. 23, #3). While looking forward with a certain measure of hope, these statement recognized a range of assessments, positive and negative, concerning the import and implications of the two churches' responses to the *Final Report*. ARC has found itself both "encouraged and challenged" by the new context between the churches which the two responses have created. Encouraged: "in that both responses rejoice in the notable progress that has been achieved." Challenged: "in that we are confronted with our willingness to stay divided over matters that would not initiate a division." The statement ends with an articulation of the current tone of relationships between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in this country: the reality of the relationship "places in front of us our need for continuous repentance of our willingness to be divided, and continuous conversion toward the unity Christ offers us with one another, which is a mirror of his own unity with the Father."

The second ARC statement, produced at the 1994 meeting, takes up one of the questions raised in the Vatican response to the *Final Report*: "ARC-USA Affirmations on the Eucharist as Sacrifice." Its purpose is to show, using traditional language, that the Eucharist as sacrifice is not an issue that divides the two churches in the USA.

At the international level, both Anglican and Roman Catholic delegations on the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission II were reconfigured in 1991 to reduce the size of the consultation and to facilitate discussion. The Rt. Rev. Mark Santer, Anglican Bishop of Birmingham, and the Most Rev. Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Roman Catholic Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, chair the international team. A discussion on Christian morals which had been begun by the previous teams was continued. The resulting agreed statement, *Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church*, was published early in 1994 by Church House (London) and the Catholic Truth Society (London), and is available for study and discussion. The statement traces areas of agreement and explores historic developments that have led to disagreement in areas of practical morality, especially contraception and remarriage after divorce. Clarifications requested by the long-awaited Vatican response to *The Final Report* of ARCIC I were approved in 1993, and were published in 1994 by Church House-Catholic Truth Society. Anglican reservations expressed at the 1988 Lambeth Conference about the text in *The Final Report* (Authority II) will be discussed in depth at forthcoming meetings, the theme of which is Tradition and Authority.

The Anglican Centre in Rome came into existence after the Second Vatican Council, following the historic meeting in 1966 between Archbishop Michael Ramsey and Pope Paul VI. It makes available a substantial library of Anglican history and theology, organizes seminars, provides hospitality for Anglicans visiting Rome, and helps Anglicans

throughout the world to follow developments in the Roman Catholic Church. The traditional ecumenical purposes of the Centre are being maintained and expanded by the new Director, the Rev. Douglas Brown SSM, and the new Governing Body, including a representative of the Episcopal Church, Dr. William Franklin, Professor of Church History and Anglican Studies at the General Theological Seminary. Funding of the Centre from the Anglican Consultative Council has now ended, and a fund-raising appeal has been launched throughout the Anglican Communion.

Consultation On Church Union

Since the Plenary assembly of the Consultation on Church Union adopted *Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting* in 1988, the main task before the participating churches has been the study and interpretation of that document. Two churches have formally adopted the proposal with some qualifications: The Presbyterian Church (USA) and the International Council of Community Churches. The other seven are at various stages of considering the proposal and its implications. Since all will have made some decision by 1998, the Executive Committee has projected a plenary meeting for 1998, when delegates may decide what happens next.

Activities designed to interpret the Consultation's vision to the churches have included many conferences and workshops in conjunction with state and local councils of churches, a women's conference held at Lake Junaluska and attended by representatives of all the churches, training and study sessions in all of the communions led or enabled by the nine Covenanting Enablers, persons appointed by their communions to coordinate this effort. In addition to a variety of pamphlets, the Consultation has produced a videotape to explain the proposal. In the Episcopal Church dioceses were asked to involve parishes in their studies and report back.

The Consultation has sought to maintain its commitment to racial and gender justice, as well as in other matters of fairness, through a Unity and Justice Task Force. This group, chaired until her retirement by Dr. Barbara Hall, has met frequently and developed a plan for acts of unity and justice in key urban areas.

General Secretary David Taylor's retirement led the Consultation to examine its working in recent months. A lean budget was adopted, and the Rev. Ralph Shotwell, retired head of the International Council of Community Churches, was elected to serve as Interim General Secretary for up to a year. A search committee now seeks a new General Secretary.

Whatever the decisions of the seven communions now considering the covenanting proposal, the journey has been productive of increased understanding, good will and cooperation among churches, increased sensitivity to matters of justice, and a vision of shared ministry in the Church.

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMISSION ON ECUMENICAL RELATIONS ON *CHURCHES IN COVENANT COMMUNION: THE CHURCH OF CHRIST UNITING*

Preface

The Consultation on Church Union (COCU) was formed in response to an historic proposal made in 1960 by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, the stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church. In a sermon at Grace Episcopal Cathedral, San Francisco, Dr Blake challenged Episcopalians to seek union with several American Protestant churches. Since 1962, COCU has engaged in a comprehensive search to articulate a theological basis for Christian unity, and to devise a united, or uniting, ecclesiastical body which will be at once "truly catholic, truly evangelical, and truly reformed."⁴ Limited to churches in the United States of America, the Consultation is composed of officially appointed representatives of the, now nine, member churches.⁵

The COCU experience has raised several questions for the Episcopal Church, the only church in COCU which maintains the historic succession of bishops, priests, and deacons. Would Episcopal Church entry into COCU covenant affect its position as a Province of the Anglican Communion? Are the theological and ecclesiastical principles of COCU consonant with Anglican teaching and with the Agreed Statements of our other ecumenical dialogues?⁶ Should the process of Christian unity proceed on a solely national and largely protestant basis? Has the context of ecumenical dialogue changed since 1960, and has history overtaken COCU?

Ecumenism and the Episcopal Church

Since 1888, Anglicans have accepted the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral⁷ as the fundamental starting point for the restoration of organic unity of the baptized. This "canon" has guided the ecumenical pursuits of the Episcopal Church, which have included participation in the World Council of Churches,⁸ the National Council of Churches of Christ, and bilateral dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and several Orthodox churches.

⁴ *Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting* (Princeton: Consultation on Church Union, 1988) pp. 3, 19. [Hereafter cited as Covenant Communion, "the document," or "the covenanting document"].

⁵ African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Episcopal Church, International Council of Community Churches, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church.

⁶ Lutheran-Episcopal, Anglican-Roman Catholic/USA, Anglican-Orthodox.

⁷ Printed in *The Book of Common Prayer, 1979*, pp. 876-8 [hereafter, *The Book of Common Prayer* will be abbreviated BCP]. The American House of Bishops (1886), in articulating the four principles of unity—Scripture, Nicene Creed, Two Sacraments, and Historic Episcopate—declared them to be "incapable of compromise" (BCP, p.877).

⁸ Including the historic Faith and Order Commission document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper Number 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982).

In the Episcopal Church, ecumenical dialogue necessarily takes place within the context of the Anglican Communion, now thirty-three autonomous provinces in full communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury and with one another.⁹ Sacramental unity through a universally shared and universally apostolic ministry is, therefore, one of the cornerstones of Anglican conversations. At the international level, Anglican representatives have engaged in bilateral dialogues with the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Orthodox Churches, as well as with the Reformed, Methodist, and non-Chalcedonian traditions.

In dialogues with churches in the Catholic tradition the existence of the historic episcopate has been assumed on both sides—whether mutually recognized or not.¹⁰ In dialogues with Protestant churches, the historic episcopate, point four of the Quadrilateral, and with it the three-fold order of clerical ministry—bishops, priests, and deacons—has been a difficult issue. The COCU proposal now before the Episcopal Church proposes a way "whereby the ordained ministries of each covenanting church become one ministry of Jesus Christ" (IV.21, p. 21).¹¹

General Convention Action

The General Convention of the Episcopal Church approved participation in COCU at its inception and each General Convention since 1961, eleven in number, has dealt in some measure with the work of COCU. A series of COCU documents¹² has elicited response from successive General Conventions. Study of the most recent COCU statement of theological agreement, *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting* (1984), raised forty-four criticisms and questions, which were enumerated in "The Report of the Theological Committee on the COCU Consensus."¹³

⁹ The Anglican Communion began in 1784 when American colonists obtained episcopal orders from the Scottish Church to support the newly forming Episcopal Church in the United States. The Communion expanded throughout the world along with the British Empire. While little thought was given in the pragmatic growth of Anglicanism to avenues of interaction, or mutual responsibility, such vehicles as the Lambeth Conferences of Anglican bishops (began 1867) and the Anglican Consultative Council (1986) have since developed.

¹⁰ See, for example, The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission Agreed Statement on "Ministry and Ordination" (*The Final Report* [London 1982] pp. 29-39; and the Anglican-Orthodox Dublin Agreed Statement, especially ¶17, in *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue* (Crestwood, New York: SVS Press, 1984), pp. 13-14.

¹¹ Citations from the document *Churches in Covenant Communion* will henceforth be made by Chapter, paragraph, and page: e.g. IV.21, p. 21.

¹² *COCU: The Reports of the Four Meetings* (1966), *Principles of Church Union* (1966), with *Study Guide* (1967), *A Plan of Union* (1970), "An Order of Worship for the Proclamation of the Word of God" and the "Celebration of the Lord's Supper" (1968), *In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting: An Emerging Theological Consensus* (1976 and 1980), *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting* (1985), *Covenanting Toward Unity: From Consensus to Communion* (1985), and *Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting* (1989).

¹³ This document is available from The Ecumenical Office, The Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York, New York 10017.

These criticisms, condensed to eight and forwarded to the 69th General Convention (1988) by the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, led General Convention to recognize the proposed COCU statement of theological agreement as an expression, in the matters with which it deals, of the Apostolic faith, order, worship, and witness of the Church, [and] an anticipation of the Church Uniting which the participating bodies by the power of the Holy Spirit wish to become, but not yet a sufficient theological basis for the covenanting acts.¹⁴

Mindful of the positive experience of those who had worked with members of other churches in the COCU process, this Convention urged the exploration of bilateral "theological dialogues with the other member churches of the Consultation" to enhance "our knowledge and understanding of each other in the future."¹⁵

The 70th General Convention (1991), calling The COCU Consensus

a significant and valuable contribution for deepening our relationships and pursuing further theological dialogue with other member churches of the Consultation in our continuing ecumenical journey toward a communion of communions¹⁶,

did not alter the opinion of the previous Convention that the consensus document was "*not yet* a sufficient theological basis" for entering into formal covenant, and again encouraged the exploration of bilateral dialogues with the member churches of COCU.

By the same resolution, the 1991 Convention voted to "defer final judgment" on the covenanting proposal until a study had been made of the 1988 document, *Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting*. On the basis of that study, the present report, the Episcopal Church will make its response to the COCU request that each member church, by formal action:

- 1) approve this text as the definitive agreement for joining with other participating churches in covenant, including the acts sufficient to enable it,
- 2) declare its willingness to enter into a relationship of covenant with other member churches of the Consultation on Church Union and other churches which similarly approve this agreement and *The COCU Consensus*, which is its theological basis, sealed by the proposed inaugural liturgies, and
- 3) begin to identify for itself such steps and procedures as may be necessary to prepare for the reconciliation of ordained ministries and for entering into covenant as set forth in this document.¹⁷

¹⁴ 1988 General Convention of the Episcopal Church, Resolution A038a.

¹⁵ Resolution B043.

¹⁶ Resolution A045.

¹⁷ *Churches in Covenant Communion*, p. v.

The Episcopal Church, along with the Anglican Communion, has given prayerful attention and made persevering efforts to assist in the restoration of the visible unity of Christ's Church on earth, believing the present separated state of the churches to be contrary to the mind of Christ and an impediment to the proclamation of the Gospel and the mission of the Body of Christ. The task in examining *Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting* has been to determine whether the COCU covenanting proposal offers a theologically sound and ecclesiological defensible way forward to the communion of communions to which the Episcopal Church is committed.

THE PROPOSED DIMENSIONS OF UNITY

Churches in Covenant Communion proposes a process of covenanting comprising "three interrelated dimensions:

- *Theological*: the churches receive and voice together the faith of the Church throughout the ages.
- *Governmental*: the governing bodies of the Church consider and act on commonly developed proposals for Christian unity.
- *Liturgical*: the churches' unity is declared and confirmed in corporate acts of worship." (III.1, p. 11).¹⁸

The present report summarizes our examination of the theological, governmental, and liturgical dimensions of the covenanting document, and the means proposed for living together in covenant relationship. We will deal with these dimensions by means of the eight "elements" or "identifying characteristics of that covenant communion" proposed in Chapter IV of the document (pp. 15ff).

THE THEOLOGICAL DIMENSION

Churches in Covenant Communion presupposes that all covenanting churches are united in confessing the one "faith of the Church through the ages"(III.1, p. 11).¹⁹

¹⁸ The form of this proposal touches upon a subject that has vexed the Episcopal Church's participation in the COCU process almost from the inception of the project: the tendency to subordinate liturgy to theology. It has long been noted—by themselves and others—that among Anglicans the doing of theology is more a reflexive rather than a systematic activity. Articulated in another way, for Anglicans—as for the early Church—theology (and hence the theological enterprise) is an activity undertaken by the Church when questions of faith, practice, and their interrelationship arise. As the theology resultant from this activity is received by the Church, doctrine (authorized theology) serves a function of guidance or critical corrective to worship, which is seen as the primary shaping of the Church's fundamental doxological response to God's covenant with humanity in Christ.

¹⁹ See also, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper number 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982) Preface, p. x. [Hereafter abbreviated BEM].

THE BLUE BOOK

Element 1: Unity in faith

Churches in Covenant Communion reiterates the intention, expressed earlier in *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting* (1984), that the *Consensus* serve as the theological basis for covenant. On the basis of this theological agreement, the covenanting document argues, "through the consultative process, confirmed by the claiming of *The COCU Consensus*," the various COCU churches will "have come to recognize in one another the apostolic faith of the church universal: the tradition" (III.2, p. 11).

The first step of the Episcopal Church toward covenanting would therefore be to recognize that theological agreement has been secured, and that the *Consensus* document is "a sufficient expression of the apostolic faith, order, worship, and witness to enable the participating churches to enter together into a covenanting relationship" (IV.4, p. 16). This two General Conventions have not been able to do.

The 1988 General Convention of the Episcopal Church judged that *The COCU Consensus* was "*not yet* a sufficient theological basis for covenanting acts and the uniting process proposed at this time by the Consultation"—a judgment unaltered by the 1991 General Convention. Since the Episcopal Church has not claimed this statement "by which the churches receive and voice together the faith of the Church through the ages" (III.1, 11), it is difficult to see how the Episcopal Church could participate in a covenanting plan based upon it. Having not accepted the theological document, we cannot claim it "as an element of covenanting" (IV.3, p. 16).²⁰

Not only is greater unity in faith asserted than either *The COCU Consensus* or *Churches in Covenant Communion* can demonstrate, but in the liturgy now proposed for reconciliation of ministries, certain questionable theological assertions occur on account of attempts to avoid traditional ("sexist") language about the Trinity. The COCU document also avoids whenever possible such traditional and biblical terms as Lord and Father. While the Episcopal Church, in some of its experimental liturgies, is also permitting gender-unspecific language, such language is proposed as a means of enriching the liturgical life of the community and not of replacing traditional language. COCU usage seems to attempt to establish inclusivity by diminution.²¹

With the covenanting document, we affirm that "ancient ecumenical creeds are not only witnesses to the faith but also abiding symbols of that faith" (IV.3, p. 15). We regret that the creeds are evident in the document only within the liturgy, and not within the theological text.

²⁰ IV.3, p. 16: "The existence of that document is a sign of these churches' basic unity in faith; their claiming of it is treated as an element of covenanting."

²¹ The COCU services of declaring and affirming covenant, for example, both substitute "Blessed be our God" (e.g., pp. 47, 69) for the traditional trinitarian invocation.

Element 2: Unity with Wholeness

With *Churches in Covenant Communion* we affirm that "Commitment to a living unity . . . requires a change of heart—"transformed by the renewal of your mind"—not for the sake of the church alone, but ultimately for the sake of that larger oneness for which our Savior prays. To repent of sins that divide Christ's body is to turn from them to God, committed by God's grace to obey the clear will of Christ" (IV.7, p. 17). Sin is identified in the document almost entirely as social injustice, however, and salvation is reduced to the ethical consequences of Christian behavior. In the liturgical Confession of Sin (p. 48), to cite one example, sin is identified with "personal and institutional violence" and forgiveness linked with obedience to commandments. Yet the spiritual unity of the Church is hurt by all forms of human sin, not only by injustice. All forms of sin—unchastity, envy, or dishonesty, for example—hurt the Body of Christ and impede the Church's life and mission. Although it is certainly true that issues of social discrimination "are theological issues, just as truly as those of sacrament and mission, for they demonstrate to the world the Church's disobedience to the will of Christ 'that they all may be one'" (IV.6, pp. 16-17), and that any social injustice within the Church jeopardizes our witness to the all-embracing love of God, the moral theology of the document is distorted by naming only aspects of social "exclusivity" as sins against the catholicity of the Church.

While this document and *The COCU Consensus* both stress divisions in the Church occasioned by human sin, neither makes it clear that such sins against social justice are not sources of doctrinal disagreement among the member churches. In the Prayers of the People (pp. 54-55) concern is chiefly focused again on justice for creation and the social order. A deeper view of sin, touching on our revolt from God's holiness, is missing, as is a higher view of holiness. Obedience, not transformation in Christ, is presented as the guiding principle of Christian commitment.

Holiness is one of the creedal marks of the Church, yet throughout the document the spiritual role of the Church is under-emphasized in favor of its this-worldly functions. The Church is rightly seen in terms of "evangelical and prophetic mission" and "the service of God's reign of justice and peace" (p. 53), but little or no mention is made of the priestly and intercessory role of the Church. In the Prayers of the People (pp. 54-55) we are asked to pray that the Church may be conscience and a witness, but not that it may be a vehicle of sanctification and grace.

That "God wills the unity of the Church" is offered as the operative dimension of *Churches in Covenant Communion* (I.4, p. 8), which takes for granted that the realities of this world require the existence of a united community called "Church" from which persons are not carelessly or maliciously excluded. While there may be no question about the will of God for the Church, there can always be legitimate questions about the will of individual churches to respond to the divine will in their own way. The COCU "vision of a reconciled and reconciling household of faith" (I.2, p. 7) needs to be focused, and the practical implications of the requisite radical change in the polity of covenanting churches to be presented as axiomatic to the faithful proclamation of the Gospel.

THE BLUE BOOK

Of seven characteristics of the covenanted community (I.3, pp. 7-8), proposed as faithfully reflecting the imperatives of selected passages in the New Testament, none supports the COCU vision of reconciliation (I.2, p. 7), and none mentions the work of God as Spirit, or of the Holy Spirit. This suggests that unity is a thing to be achieved by human effort more than that unity which God the Holy Spirit already gives to the Church, a unity not affected by our historical, theological, and denominational separations, but needing to be revealed.

Element 3: Mutual Recognition of Members in One Baptism

We recognize, as have Anglicans since the Reformation and as we are invited by the 1974 COCU plenary, that "all who are baptized into Christ are members of Christ's universal Church and belong to and share in Christ's ministry through the people of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (IV.14, pp. 18-19).

Only here, in citing the 1974 resolution, and in the liturgical texts of the Nicene Creed²² and the Apostles' Creed,²³ is the Trinitarian Name of God, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"—the baptismal formula required by the Chicago Quadrilateral²⁴ and by the Episcopal Church²⁵—evoked. Besides leaving the impression that "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" has been relegated to a historic formula rather than engaged as part of the Church's living language of prayer and theological discourse, this also raises the question of whether all the baptisms we are asked to recognize have been trinitarian.

The Episcopal Church affirms that "Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church"²⁶; at the same time, *The Book of Common Prayer* explicitly states that, "In the course of their Christian development, those baptized at an early age are expected, when they are ready and have been duly prepared, to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism and to receive the laying on of hands by the bishop."²⁷ What effect would the covenant's requirement that covenanting churches "receive into our churches, without impediment, Christians baptized in all churches bound by this covenant," have on our rite of confirmation? Could Episcopal bishops continue to exhort baptized persons to make "a public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism,"²⁸ and receive the laying on of hands in Confirmation, as our tradition once required for full membership and still requires of those wishing to hold any office in the Church? Would such an insistence be an impediment to covenant communion and a violation of the spirit of the covenant?

²² Part II, pp. 50-51.

²³ Part II, pp. 88-89.

²⁴ BCP, p. 876.

²⁵ See, e.g. General Convention 1991, Resolutions B033a, and A046a: *Guidelines (a)*.

²⁶ BCP p. 298.

²⁷ BCP, p. 298.

²⁸ BCP, p. 412.

Element 4: Mutual Recognition of Each Other as Churches

The Episcopal Church identifies the Church as "the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head and of which all baptized persons are members."²⁹ The Anglican tradition has made no claim to be the one true and only Church within a divided Christendom, but holds that within the Body of Christ each "church" is somehow incomplete so long as we continue in separation.

Episcopalians who have participated in the COCU process and worked and worshipped with delegates from the other COCU churches have come away with a strong sense of oneness in Christ, a warm regard for persons in other Christian traditions, and a keen awareness of the complementary gifts each tradition could share with the others. The very process which has fostered this awareness in individuals, however, has blocked mutual discovery among the member churches. Rather than facilitating common exploration of our different theologies and spiritualities, COCU has itself been the entity through which all participating churches relate. It has formed, as it were, the hub to which the spokes, the churches, converge. But the churches have not really touched one another.

Mutual recognition follows mutual understanding, which comes from mutual knowledge. The Episcopal Church does not know the COCU churches; Episcopalians only know *about* them. Until we have had an opportunity to learn to know one another by studying—and experiencing—each other's theologies, spiritualities, and liturgies in dialogue, we will remain strangers. To use another analogy, COCU has functioned as a marriage broker inviting us to enter into an arranged marriage. The broker brings the partners together, assures them they are compatible, and then leaves them to hope that familiarity and intimacy will develop after the wedding (covenanting).

Essential to the recognition of churches, by the covenanting document, is the mutual recognition and reconciliation of ordained ministries (IV.19., p.21). To this aspect of the COCU covenanting proposal we turn in the next section.

THE GOVERNMENTAL DIMENSION

The proposal for reconciliation of ordained ministries is based on "the theological understanding of ministry, both lay and ordained," in *The COCU Consensus* (IV.19, p. 21). The present document argues that "there is a historic tradition which the churches hold in common, despite their differing expressions of it," and proposes a means of reconciling the ministries of these churches in a series of national, regional, and local liturgies.

²⁹ *An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism*, BCP, p. 854.

Element 5. Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministry

There is no doubt that "mutual recognition and reconciliation of the ordained ministries is essential...to the recognition of churches" (IV.19, p. 21). In conformity with the model of the early Church, the document recommends that the reconciliation of ministries take place within the context of a eucharistic liturgy;³⁰ in the presence of the local church, represented by lay and ordained members; with ratification expressed by the active participation of ministers exercising *episcopé* in the various churches; and by use of the ancient sacramental symbol of the laying on of hands.

Consequent upon our acceptance of one another's incorporation into Christ in baptism, Anglicans do not "call into question for a moment the spiritual reality of the ministries of those Communion which do not possess the Episcopate [but]... thankfully acknowledge that these ministries have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace."³¹

SACRAMENTS

In setting out the form for the reconciliation of ministries, the covenanting document is careful to rule out any hint of "ordination" or "re-ordination,"³² and yet it uses the traditional symbol of ordination, "the historic sign of episcopal succession—the laying on of hands" (IV.25, p. 23). While the laying on of hands is used for many different purposes in the Church (cf. VI.25), all of them are associated with the transmission of the Holy Spirit. And while the document clearly states that the proposed ceremonies are intended to constitute not "liturgies of ordination or reordination, but of reconciliation among those whose ordained ministry already has been mutually recognized" (IV. 24, pp. 22-23), the laying on of hands has for too long been too closely associated with ordination in Christian tradition to escape all ambiguity of interpretation, particularly among those who would not have read the *Churches in Covenant Communion*. An ancient symbol of ordination is being used in the proposal as a quasi-sacramental sign of non-ordination. The liturgical gesture by which reconciliation would be expressed is thus open to ambiguity and confusion.

In Anglican theology, a sacramental rite such as ordination conveys inward and spiritual grace through an outward and visible sign. What is the point of a liturgical ceremony in which the time-honored outward and visible sign (the laying on of hands) is not intended to symbolize the inward grace traditionally associated with it? The gift of historic episcopacy appears, by the laying on of hands, to be shared, but the bestowal of sacramental orders is specifically excluded.

³⁰ IV.7, p. 35: "the liturgy for declaring covenant among the churches will conclude with the celebration of the Lord's Supper...under the leadership of a reconciled covenanting bishop."

³¹ Lambeth Conference 1920, Resolution 9, section VII; Roger Coleman, ed., *Resolutions of the twelve Lambeth Conferences, 1367-1988* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1992) p. 47.

³² IV.24, p. 22: "Lest there be any misunderstanding in regard to the sign of reconciliation which these [COCU] liturgies employ—the laying on of hands by an authorized minister of oversight—the covenant churches recognize and declare that these are not liturgies of ordination or re-ordination, but of reconciliation among those whose ordained ministry already has been mutually recognized. . . ."

EPISCOPE AND EPISCOPATE

The proposed "mutual sharing of our ordered ministries" claims to include the "recovery of a visible and widely valued sign of unity and continuity within the Church of God," the episcopate (IV.25, p. 23). The document recognizes that only by the recovery of this historic sign can the covenant communion hope to "effectively invite recognition of its ordained ministries from all parts of the universal Church."³³ No covenanting church, however, is asked to change its way of defining *episcopé* or of inducting candidates into it. Instead we are told that "It will be the responsibility of each participating church, prior to the COCU liturgy in which covenant is declared and ministries reconciled, to determine how its present categories of ordained ministry relate to the historic categories set forth in *The COCU Consensus*, Chapter VII" (IV.28, p. 24). It is, therefore, hard to see how the reception of the historic episcopate, so construed, amounts to anything more than a vague appreciation for it. Moreover, we could end up with the anomaly of having certain people designated as "deacons, presbyters, and bishops of the covenant communion of churches" (IV.30, p. 25) who would not be so designated in their own church. The covenant communion would therefore lack a firm and common ecclesial basis in the participating churches. Anglican willingness to see the historic episcopate "locally adapted in the methods of its administration,"³⁴ surely never meant episcopacy by approximation.

The Episcopal Church, as a member of the Anglican Communion and in fidelity to its own sacramental theology, has a responsibility to safeguard the historic episcopate—its outward signs and its spiritual grace. Adhering to a tradition first codified at the Council of Nicaea,³⁵ *The Book of Common Prayer* specifically requires,³⁶ as one of the appropriate and indispensable signs of episcopal consecration, the presence of at least three ordaining bishops.³⁷ The Lambeth Conference of 1908 affirmed this minimal number of ordaining bishops.³⁸ The preface to the Ordinal in *The Book of Common Prayer* expressly safeguards the Anglican conviction that

...the threefold ministry is not the exclusive property of this portion of Christ's catholic church but is a gift from God for the nurture of his people and the proclamation of his Gospel everywhere. Accordingly, the manner of

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral (1886, 1888), Point 4; BCP 877, 878.

³⁵ Canon IV: "It is by all means proper that a bishop should be appointed by all the bishops in the province; but should this be difficult, either on account of urgent necessity or because of distance, three at least should meet together and then the ordination should take place." G. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* II:669/670; translation from *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church*, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, volume 14 (rpt Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.) p. 11.

³⁶ BCP, p. 511.

³⁷ "When a bishop is to be ordained, the Presiding Bishop of the Church, or a bishop appointed by the Presiding Bishop, presides and serves as chief consecrator. At least two other bishops serve as co-consecrators."

³⁸ Resolution 75, following its reception of the report of the Committee on Reunion and Intercommunion, allowed for the possibility of reunion of ministries "on the basis of consecrations to the episcopate on lines suggested by such precedents as those of 1610," the temporary restoration of the episcopate to the Church of Scotland through three bishops consecrated in England.

THE BLUE BOOK

ordaining in this Church is to be such as has been, and is, most generally recognized by Christian people as suitable for the conferring of the sacred orders of bishop, priest, and deacon.³⁹

Reconciliation of ministries, accordingly to *Churches in Covenant Communion*, is to be made "representatively," with "a small but representative number of ordained ministers (a bishop, a presbyter, and a deacon) from each church" (V.6, p. 35). The regional service calls for a "mutual recognition of one another's ministry of *episcopé*... through a mutual laying on of hands among the bishops, together with other appropriate signs and prayer" (V.8, p. 36), with no requirement that three, or even one, bishop in Anglican orders be present.

CANONICAL IMPEDIMENTS

The canons of the Episcopal Church would need to be altered by General Convention prior to such reconciliation. To take part in a liturgy of "reconciliation of ministries" at which fewer than three bishops in historic succession were present, the Episcopal Church would have to agree at two successive General Conventions to set aside the Preface to the Ordination Rites and the prefatory rubrics to episcopal ordinations,⁴⁰ as well as the prefatory rubrics to presbyteral and diaconal ordinations requiring the presence of at least two presbyters.⁴¹

INTENTION

The proposal for reconciliation of "categories of ordained ministries within one's polity [which] correspond most closely to that of 'bishop,' etc." (V.5a, p. 34) never addresses the question of the intention of the member churches in ordaining or installing persons to the offices of oversight which are now to be equated with and, in some circumstances referred to, as episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate. In the act of sharing the gift of episcopate (as in presbyteral and diaconal ordination), special emphasis has historically been placed on intention, the mind of the Church, expressed through its college of bishops with the consent of the people.⁴² To overlook the absence of this intention in the present case would ignore the pleas of Anglican bishops at the Lambeth Conference of 1958 that, in Prayer Book revision, a declaration be made after the imposition of hands in ordination that "the candidate was ordained to that particular ministry in the Church of

³⁹ BCP, p. 510.

⁴⁰ BCP, p. 510, 511.

⁴¹ BCP, pp. 524, 536.

⁴² The great value of articulating this intention has taken on special significance for Anglicans in ecumenical discussions in the past century, since the Bishop of Rome, in *Apostolicae curae* (1896), judged Anglican orders defective in form and intention in the 1550 ordinal. Anglicans replied that the intention to ordain and the traditional form (ordination by three validly consecrated bishops) had, in fact, been intentionally, clearly, and unequivocally maintained. Now that new evidence of Roman Catholic awareness of "historical continuity" within Anglicanism has been retrieved from the Vatican Archives and the door to a reconsideration of the possibility of reconciling Anglican and Roman Catholic orders been set ajar, the Episcopal Church as a member of the Anglican Communion would act irresponsibly in obfuscating at best and at worst forfeiting its historic theological position by passing over this question of intention, and the related question of the form of episcopal ordination. See ARC/USA: "Anglican Orders: The Dialogue's Evolving Context," *Origins* 20/9 (11 July 1990), 136-146, esp. 138-139.

God" and that the office be clearly named in the prayer of ordination.⁴³ Without clear intention of purpose and clear action, the bestowal of episcopate is reduced to a mere legal and liturgical technicality. We are not being asked by the covenanting document to suspend the Preface to the Ordinal temporarily for the sake of the historic episcopate.⁴⁴ We are being asked to redefine the episcopate itself.

It is far from clear whether any of the other churches desire for themselves episcopacy as *The Book of Common Prayer* understands the episcopal office or whether, in terms of Anglican understanding, the office would be transmitted by this casually representational laying on of hands. Even more seriously, in the act of "recognizing" non-episcopal ministries, the principle articulated in the Preface to the Ordination Rites in *The Book of Common Prayer*—that "No persons are allowed to exercise the offices of bishop, priest, and deacon in this Church unless they are so ordained, or have already received such ordination with the laying on of hands by bishops who are themselves duly qualified to confer Holy Orders"—would be compromised. The constant Anglican conviction of the sacramentality of the episcopal office and of presbyteral and diaconal orders—"one of the bonds which holds Anglicans together"⁴⁵—seems hereby to be dismissed.

ORDERS OF MINISTRY

Churches in Covenant Communion calls for "the participation of ministers, lay and ordained, from as many of the covenant churches as possible" in "mutually acceptable rites" of ordination subsequent to covenanting.⁴⁶ Anglican theology and practice of ordination are more complex and nuanced than we discern here. The root problem in both *The COCU Consensus* and *Covenant Communion* seems to be uncertainty as to what ordination to any specific order might mean, with a resultant confusion of functions and authority. All ministers—laity, bishops, priests, and deacons—share in the liturgy of ordination according to their orders. But in the ordination of a bishop, only bishops lay hands on the ordinand. Because of the particular bond between deacon and bishop, only the bishop ordaining lays hands on the diaconal ordinand. Bishops and presbyters, but not deacons and lay persons, lay hands on the presbyteral ordinand.

In the service welcoming "Ordained Deacons and Ordained Ministers of Governance," these two categories are lumped together, whereas among Anglicans the diaconate is an office of service and not governance. Governance is primarily (although not exclusively) associated with the episcopate.⁴⁷ This identification of governance with episcopacy, we might add, is increasingly the consensual view of the world-wide ecumenical community.⁴⁸

⁴³ Paul Bradshaw, "Ordination, 7: Reformation Churches, 3. Anglican" in *The Study of Liturgy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 338.

⁴⁴ As is true of the Lutheran-Episcopal *Concordat of Agreement*, Chapter V.5; William A. Norgren and William G. Rusch, eds., *Towards Full Communion and "A Concordat of Agreement,"* LED III (Forward Movement Publications/Augsburg Press, 1991), p. 100.

⁴⁵ Cf. Paul Bradshaw, *The Study of Liturgy*, p. 338.

⁴⁶ IV.27, p. 24.

⁴⁷ BCP, p. 518.

⁴⁸ For example, BEM, Ministry, III, pp. 20-21.

THE BLUE BOOK

This confusion in terminology is perhaps reflective of a still more fundamental lack of agreement about the ecclesiological nature of the unity we seek.

CONSEQUENCES

The quasi-sacramental liturgies of reconciliation proposed in the COCU document produce more confusion than clarity. Those who are to be ministers of oversight would be persons who would have been inducted by means of a ceremony for which the intention of ordaining to the historic episcopate was expressly disclaimed and at which the traditional number of ordaining bishops was not present. Would participating churches understand, after the liturgical actions, that their ministers of oversight share in the historic episcopate, or that they have entered into a continuing process of entering into that succession, or will they instead understand that all ministries of oversight, those in the historic episcopate and those in other ministerial polities, share similar authority, similar responsibility, and identical validity, even without sharing sacramental orders? If the Episcopal Church were to covenant with the other COCU churches, would Episcopalians be asked to accept ordination and confirmation at the hands of ministers of oversight whom they do not see, and who do not see themselves, as bishops in the historic episcopate?

Continuity with the Church universal, past, present, and future, would be compromised by unconsidered acceptance of the proposed reconciliation of ministries. That Anglicans recognize the effectiveness of other forms of ministry does not lessen the value they attach to the episcopacy as a sign of apostolic faith and continuity with the ancient Church, and as a means of unity in the Church to come. The efforts Anglicans have made to preserve the historic episcopate through five hundred years of divided Christendom, and to introduce it to the American church, signal the importance they attach to it. In their relations with Roman Catholics, Orthodox, and Old Catholics, as well as with Lutherans and Reformed churches, Anglicans have defended and claimed this sign.⁴⁹

SHARING OF GIFTS

In COCU discussions, Anglicans have thought that they were being asked to share what they regard as a precious gift⁵⁰ which they believe has been entrusted to them by the providence of God and happenstance of history. Yet the way proposed by the covenanting document for the sharing of this gift in the reconciliation of ministries, bears only a superficial resemblance to the pattern which has been generally recognized by the Catholic tradition. Beyond the confusion already mentioned, this raises the specter of a uniting church still unfaithful to the teaching and practice of the early Church.

If covenanting churches specifically exclude ordination from the liturgy of reconciliation, and if the historic episcopate is not to be transmitted in the manner hallowed by at least seventeen centuries of Christian tradition, the Episcopal Church would not be contributing to the COCU Church the single most important gift it has believed it has to offer. And if the historic episcopate is neither wanted nor transmitted, the point of the proposed liturgical laying on of hands becomes very obscure.

⁴⁹ See above, note 7.

⁵⁰ Cf. *Covenant Communion*, II.7, p. 10.

ECUMENICAL IMPLICATIONS

These defects of intention and of form would compromise wider Anglican ecumenical efforts. If dialogue between Canterbury and the churches of the Catholic tradition is to be pursued as seriously as is dialogue with Reformation churches, Episcopalians cannot disregard their own historical teaching and theological judgment by entering into a reconciliation of ministries that does not safeguard the very principles on which their ecclesiology rests. However much we may esteem ministers of oversight who do not claim succession in the historic episcopate, Anglicans continue to believe that we have received in this "succession a sign of the unbroken continuity of apostolic tradition and life"⁵¹ as a gift from God, and have a responsibility to ensure "its transmission to the Church of tomorrow."⁵² Setting aside any misplaced claims of the superiority or "purity"⁵³ of episcopal ordination, many Anglicans and some of their dialogue partners will regard the COCU reconciliation liturgy as a compromise at best and at worst a dilution of the historic episcopate which imperils its continuing existence within the covenanting churches and therefore within subsequent American Anglicanism.⁵⁴ Since the proposed "recovery" of the historic episcopate would not, according to the document, necessarily affect the polity of any of the other churches,⁵⁵ the Episcopal Church would be compromising to no purpose its own theology of the episcopate by participating in the liturgical acts tied to covenanting. By attempting to be all things to all church traditions, COCU has proposed a way to reconcile diverse forms of ministry which, upon close examination, asks for a sign without substance and a union without real reconciliation.

THE LITURGICAL DIMENSION

Element 6. Celebrating the Eucharist Together

The centrality the document accords the Eucharist—the sacrament "at the heart of the Church's life" (IV.32, p. 25)—reflects the growing recovery in all traditions of the teaching and practice of the early Church. We welcome the recognition that the Eucharist is a "powerful centering reality for the Church's mission," serving as a counterweight to the temptation "to pursue either institutional or ideological ends in mission." The very act of showing forth "the Lord's death until he comes" is, as the document declares, a "powerful

⁵¹ Anglican-Orthodox Dublin Agreed Statement (1984) para. 102 (g).

⁵² ARCIC I; Ministry, paragraph 9 (*The Final Report*, p. 33). On the development of post-Reformation Anglican attitudes on the necessity of the historic episcopate, see Norgren-Rusch, *Towards Full Communion*, chapter 4: "The Episcopal Church and the Ministry of the Historic Episcopate," pp. 59-71.

⁵³ See, on this point, the discussion of L. William Countryman, *The Language of Ordination: Ministry in an Ecumenical Context* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), pp. 36ff, 100f, et passim.

⁵⁴ The proposal mandates (IV.27, p. 24) that after reconciliation, "no more ordinations be carried out in denominational isolation."

⁵⁵ The document states that: "there can be seen in the divergent polities of the member churches particular ministries which are in fact episcopal, presbyteral, diaconal, and lay in their essential nature. . . . Mutual recognition of ordained ministries is intended to acknowledge in these ministries the manifest blessing of God and the fruit of the Spirit, and to affirm that they are rooted in the apostolic tradition. Such recognition does not obscure real differences, but neither does it depend upon first setting those differences aright according to one's own tradition before recognition can be granted" (19-20, p. 21).

THE BLUE BOOK

act of gospel proclamation" (IV.36, p. 27). We see the introduction of eschatology in this section as a considerable advance over *The COCU Consensus* as a whole.

Yet the power of the Eucharist to effect transformation both of believers and of the Church, to be the means whereby the Holy Spirit may "bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all,"⁵⁶ is overlooked. In its eucharistic articulations, as in its theology and ecclesiology generally, the document nowhere mentions the transforming power of God's grace. In the Eucharist, Anglicans believe, we become "one body with [Christ], that he may dwell in us, and we in him," and are made "worthy to stand before" God.⁵⁷ The fellowship and unity which eucharistic sharing confers is possible only because each worshipper participates in the death, resurrection, and eternal life of the Risen Christ. In him, we are drawn into the Holy Trinity and in Christ become one with our brothers and sisters in Christ, not only socially, not in solidarity alone, but ontologically, in the very depths of our being.

REAL PRESENCE

With respect to the real presence of Christ, *Churches in Covenant Communion* says simply that "the crucified and risen Christ is really present to us in the sacramental meal" (IV.34, p. 26). The presence of Christ in the sacrament is not directly tied to the elements of bread and wine, nor is any mention made of the reverent disposition of the consecrated elements. While a diversity of theological opinion on the manner of eucharistic presence has existed within the Anglican Communion and continues to exist, *The Book of Common Prayer* has consistently taught that the consecrated Bread and Wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.⁵⁸ Given this disparity of understandings, we have reservations about whether "sufficient agreement regarding the meaning of the Lord's Supper" (IV.34 p. 26) truly exists among the COCU churches.

WIDER ECUMENISM

On these several reservations, we refer to Agreed Statements which have been reached between Anglicans and Roman Catholics,⁵⁹ Anglicans and Orthodox,⁶⁰

⁵⁶ BCP, p. 374 (Eucharistic Prayer D).

⁵⁷ BCP, pp. 336, 368.

⁵⁸ BCP, pp. 339, 365, 366.

⁵⁹ *The Final Report: Eucharist* III. 6: "Communion with Christ in the eucharist presupposes his true presence, effectually signified by the bread and wine which, in this mystery, become his body and blood. The real presence of his body and blood can, however, only be understood within the context of the redemptive activity whereby he gives himself, and in himself reconciliation, peace and life, to his own" (p. 14). *The Final Report* also notes that "The Lord's words at the last supper, 'Take and eat, this is my body,' do not allow us to dissociate the gift of the presence and the act of sacramental eating. The elements are not mere signs; Christ's body and blood become really present and are really given. But they are really present and given in order that, receiving them, believers may be united in communion with Christ the Lord" (III. 9, p. 15).

⁶⁰ *The Moscow Statement* VI. 23: "The eucharistic understanding of the Church affirms the presence of Jesus Christ in the Church, which is his Body, and in the Eucharist. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, all faithful communicants share in the one Body of Christ, and become one body with him" (p. 88). And VI. 24: "The Eucharist actualizes the Church. The Christian community has a basic sacramental character....The Church is not only built up by the Eucharist, but is also a condition for it....The Church celebrating the Eucharist becomes fully itself, that is *koinonia*, fellowship—communion" (p. 89).

Anglicans and Lutherans,⁶¹ and Anglican and Reformed.⁶²

Finally, we point to the discussion of Eucharist in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* as a measured theological expression of eucharistic teaching which includes the many aspects of this great mystery, including proclamation of the Word, *anamnesis* of Christ, the real presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements, invocation and presence of the Holy Spirit, and transformation in Christ, and a clear statement of belief that the Eucharist is the "living and effective sign of Christ's sacrifice, accomplished once for all on the cross and still operative on behalf of all humankind."⁶³ All these elements of the Christian tradition have been superficially treated or passed over entirely in the COCU documents.

BEYOND RECONCILIATION: MISSION

Element 7: Engaging Together in Christ's Mission

The COCU proposal is strongest when it reminds us that "Mission is essential to life in the Church" (IV.38) and that "for the sake of the world" Christians need to act together in worship, proclamation of the Gospel, and action (IV.44, p. 29). We are grateful for the comprehensive treatment of mission developed in this section, which accords with our understanding that "The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love" (*BCP, Catechism*, p. 855). We especially appreciate the sound theological handling of worship as participation in the prayer—and hence in the mission—of Christ: "What happens in worship is of vital significance for the world: the church intercedes for the world, and Christ is present for the life of the people" (IV.40, p. 28).

While the document argues persuasively that "uniformity in structure is not essential to covenant communion" (II.5, p. 9), the essential factors are unstated and unidentified. Likewise, there is no consideration of how they are to be arrived at and maintained. The COCU focus on the shared life in local communities has to be confronted by the realities of

The Dublin Agreed Statement III. 58: "In the Eucharist we become partakers of the Lord's Supper. The Eucharist is *anamnesis* and participation in the death and resurrection of Christ, liturgically affirmed and realized in the annual celebration of the Paschal mystery. This is renewed every week in the feast of the Lord's Day and in every celebration of the Holy Eucharist" (p. 32). Cf. Epilogue VI. 108: "We are agreed in describing the Eucharist as an *anamnesis* and participation in the death and resurrection of Christ" (p. 47).

⁶¹ *The Niagara Report* III. 65: "We believe that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, distributed and received under the forms of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper" (p. 35).

⁶² *God's Reign and Our Unity* III. 65: "The Eucharist is a memorial (*anamnesis*) of the unique sacrifice of Christ. This is more than a mere mental action of recollection. It is the 'living and effective sign of Christ's sacrifice, accomplished once for all on the cross, and still operative on behalf of all humankind' (BEM, p. 11, para. 5). When we 'do this' in obedience to his command, we know that his words are true: 'This is my body. This is my blood.' We know that in the action of the Eucharist Christ is truly present to share his risen life with us and to 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. And as he, the risen Lord, ever lives at the Father's side to make intercession for us, so we, united with him, offer up in this action of the Eucharist our intercessions for the Church and the world" (p. 41).

⁶³ BEM, Eucharist, II.B.5, p. 11.

social categorizations, congregational histories, and cultural expectations in maintaining church life and distinctive ways. Such considerations go beyond "ecclesiastical systems." The use of the phrase familiar to Anglicans, "communion of communions" (II.6, p. 10) adds another principle of cohesion to those already listed. We need to identify how this principle will be distinguished at the local level from the other principles already at work in covenanting.

Element 8: Formation of Covenant Councils

National, regional, and local Covenant Councils are to be established for the "ordering of the covenanting ministries of bishops, presbyters, deacons, and lay persons" (IV.46, p. 30).

The primary purpose of the proposed covenanting councils, whether local, regional, or national, would be "to enable the communion of churches in covenant"(IV.46, p. 30). While we agree that "church unity will be neither visible nor organic if it is not embodied in tangible form" (IV.45, p. 30), from an Episcopal perspective, the authority of the covenanting councils—which "they will derive...from the judicatories that brought them into being" (IV.46, p.30)—is weak and its focus is too congregational.

The governmental, and therefore authoritative, dimension involves more than voting; it should be placed within the context of common reflection and dialogue, education, and prayer. No effort should be made to separate the activities of the Church into watertight compartments, and no naive assumption entertained that voting invariably reflects the Spirit's movements more than it does human machinations.

While not denying that the covenanting process entails a national and a regional dimension, the document emphasizes that "It is the local covenanting council, more than the regional or the national, on which primary attention falls in the covenanting process." This is stated to be because "the primary focus of the covenanting process is the local worshipping community, gathered around the Word and sacraments, and giving expression to the Church's missionary vocation in the world" (IV.47, p. 30). The "local worshipping community" in COCU parlance clearly means a congregation. For Episcopalians, as for the ancient Church, however, the "local church" is the diocese. We see here an example of the disparity between COCU and Anglican theological methodology. The principal and informing rationale for Anglican considerations of polity lies in liturgy. Precisely because bishops are the principal ministers of Baptism and Eucharist (the chief preachers and presiders in Word and Sacrament), they also have juridical (pastoral/disciplinary) and magisterial (teaching/doctrinal) oversight. The problem we perceive, then, stems from a lack of parallelism between the covenanting councils and the order and supporting doctrine of ordained ministries, and a lack of continuity with the model of the early Church.

If the covenanting councils were to be no more than local, regional, or national councils of churches, there would be no problem with their proposed formation and authority. But since the covenanting councils would be seeking to implement a new relationship among the churches, there first needs to be greater agreement on ecclesiology among the churches involved.

We are sympathetic to the document's insistence that covenanting councils should include representational ethnic, gender, social, economic, and racial diversity, a position which reflects previous COCU documents.⁶⁴ The governance of a spiritual body by those chosen for their income, gender, or race, does not, however, inspire the same confidence in leadership as the criteria of the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers that leaders be chosen for their knowledge of the teachings and traditions of the Church, their holiness of life, their steadfastness in the faith, and their discerning judgment.⁶⁵

CONCLUSIONS

Churches in Covenant Communion identifies as the first step each church is to take in "claiming the theological consensus," the claiming of *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church Uniting* (1984).⁶⁶ This the Episcopal Church has been unable unreservedly to do. The "second formal step of covenanting" is "to study and take formal action upon the document, *Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting* (1988)."⁶⁷ This report constitutes the result of that study. It remains now for the Episcopal Church to take action. The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations must propose to the 71st General Convention its answer to the question first posed by the Convention of 1988:

Does the revised Covenanting document allow it to be said that the Consensus document is a sufficient theological basis for the covenanting acts and the uniting process proposed by the Consultation on Church Union?

and to the same question restated by the Convention of 1991:

Is the Covenanting document a way whereby the Episcopal Church can advance the vision of visible unity in a communion of communions?

Our Report has tried both to highlight positive contributions of *Churches in Covenant Communion* and to signal those areas which cause concern to Anglicans. On the positive side, we can say that careful study of the covenanting text has helped us clarify the vision of visible unity. In this respect we believe that our study of this text has enabled us, and we trust will help the Episcopal Church, to understand even more clearly the nature of that future "communion of communions" to which the Episcopal Church is committed.

On the less positive side, we must state that after careful study we have serious reservations about the theology and polity of *Churches in Covenant Communion*, and about its liturgies of reconciliation. The covenanting document has neither answered nor resolved the substantial theological objections which the SCER reported to the 69th General

⁶⁴ *Covenant Communion*, Appendix, 2, p. 39. Cf. *The COCU Consensus*, pp. 9-10, 14.

⁶⁵ 1 Tim. 3:1-8; Titus 1:6-9; Heb. 13:7; *Didache* 15; *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.1.1-3, 2.2.5; Cyprian of Carthage, *Ep.* 72.2; Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus haereses* 4.26.5.

⁶⁶ V.2, p. 33.

⁶⁷ V.3, p. 33.

THE BLUE BOOK

Convention regarding *The COCU Consensus* and which formed the basis of that Convention's resolution that the Consensus text was "not yet a sufficient theological basis for the covenanting acts."

Because we agree with the covenanting document when it declares that "The theological dimension of entering into covenanting is basic to the rest" (p. 11), we cannot recommend that the Episcopal Church take this next step. As our study indicates in some detail, precisely this dimension is seriously lacking in the proposed text. While we find ourselves enriched and our vision clarified by the points we have affirmed, we do not find fundamental theological agreement sufficient to allow covenanting as it has been proposed.

The reservations of past Conventions and the present Report entail no lessening or termination of a desire for unity with the churches of the Consultation on Church Union. We endorse as a hopeful sign the 69th General Convention's authorization of the SCER to explore the possibility of bilateral dialogues with the member churches, and its request that SCER seek fresh approaches toward "The Unity We Seek" with other member churches of the Consultation.⁶⁸ And we pray that the Holy Spirit will guide the Episcopal Church in its deliberations into all truth and into that unity which Christ wills for his Church.

Resolution #A029

Consultation on Church Union

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That the Episcopal Church not enter a**
- 2 **relationship of covenant communion as proposed in *Churches in Covenant***
- 3 ***Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting (1988)*, and be it further**

- 4 *Resolved*, **That the Episcopal Church continue its membership in the Consultation on**
- 5 **Church Union on the understanding that the Episcopal Church invite the churches, or**
- 6 **families of churches, who are our partners in COCU to establish dialogues to consider**
- 7 **the theological differences remaining between us and to seek new ways forward in the**
- 8 **quest for Christian unity.**

EXPLANATION

The 69th General Convention (1988: Resolution B043) and the 70th General Convention (1991: Resolution AO45) urged the exploration of bilateral "theological dialogues with the other members of the Consultation" to enhance "our knowledge and understanding of each other." Moreover, the Episcopal Church has not found in *The COCU Consensus* "sufficient theological agreement" to allow it to enter into the covenanting process proposed by *Churches in Covenant Communion* (1988 Resolution A038a).

⁶⁸ We take heart in the consequent establishment of conversations with the historic Black Methodist Episcopal Churches. The progress made in other bilateral dialogues convinces us that it is in this direction that Christian unity will be recovered.

Lutheran - Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee

The Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee, appointed by the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations and by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, was charged with responsibility for implementing the following goals:

1. To assist the two churches in understanding and in moving towards full communion, and in the reception of *The Concordat of Agreement* and its accompanying theological document *Toward Full Communion*.
2. To continue to explore and to recommend ways of implementing the 1982 Joint Agreement, including reception of *Implications of the Gospel*.
3. To assist in developing processes and resources for a study of the above mentioned documents.
4. To interpret the relationship between full communion and mission, as set forth in the above mentioned documents.
5. To facilitate communication among all expressions of the two churches (national, synodical, diocesan, local) regarding proposals put forth by LED III, responses to the proposals, and implications of the proposals.
6. To assist in the interpretation of the proposals put forth by the LED III within the wider ecumenical context, seeking comments and responses from other ecumenical partners; comments and responses from inter-Anglican bodies (e.g., ACC) and inter-Lutheran bodies (e.g., LWF); and to be sensitive to areas of dissent and concern within our two churches.

What *The Concordat of Agreement* proposes, full communion between two churches that have been divided since the Reformation of the sixteenth century, represents as bold an ecumenical venture as either church has ever been asked to consider. Bold though the venture may be, its roots are firmly anchored in the historic Joint Agreement of 1982, whereby the Episcopal Church and the then three separate Lutheran bodies resolved to enter into interim Eucharistic fellowship—to engage, whenever possible, in joint missionary endeavors, and thereby to lay the foundations for the full communion now being proposed.

In a real sense the two churches are being asked to share gifts which have shaped their identities for more than four hundred years. For Episcopalians, the gift to be shared is the historic episcopate, whereby the faith of the Catholic Church has been handed on from generation to generation. For Lutherans, the gift to be shared is that church's historic emphasis on doctrine and catechesis, as represented in the Augsburg Confession. The two churches are of one mind in recognizing the pivotal importance of apostolic succession, even though this commitment to keeping faith with the teaching and practice of the apostles has heretofore been expressed in different ways.

Throughout the five meetings of the Coordinating Committee during this past triennium, members of the committee were of one mind in their understanding that ecumenism must be understood within the larger context of mission, "proclaiming by word and example the good news of the Gospel." Thus, in the development of study materials, a

key question has been, "How may we expect full communion to better enable the mission of the Church?"

The coming triennium (1995-1997) will continue to be a time of study at every level of the Church's life— theological seminaries, diocesan ecumenical commissions, parishes, joint gatherings of bishops— wherever the Church comes together to seek God's will.

For Episcopalians and Lutherans, the year 1997 will be a time of decision. The biennial Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA and triennial General Convention of the Episcopal Church will, fortuitously, coincide in the summer of 1997 in Philadelphia. For Episcopalians, a major decision facing the General Convention will be the temporary suspension, in this case only, of the seventeenth century restriction that "no persons are allowed to exercise the offices of bishop, priest, or deacon in this Church unless they are so ordained, or have already received such ordination with the laying on of hands by bishops who are themselves duly qualified to confer Holy Orders" (*BCP*, p. 510). Because such a decision affecting the Prayer Book is deemed to be a constitutional matter, it will need to be reaffirmed by the succeeding General Convention in the year 2000.

Lutherans will be called upon to make equally far-reaching decisions, including the enactment of a dispensation for ordinands of the Episcopal Church from the Lutheran ordination requirement of subscription to the unaltered Augsburg Confession.

Such momentous steps, if taken, will constitute an ecumenical initiative of major proportions, not only for Lutherans and Episcopalians, but for the wider ecumenical movement. Preparatory steps at the local level— common study, partnerships in mission, and Eucharistic sharing— will require the best effort on the part of both churches. Consequently, the word "study" in the resolution that follows should be understood to convey a responsibility perhaps more serious than any ecumenical study heretofore proposed. Responsible study will also address the question of the relationship between full communion and mission, and will be sensitive to areas of dissent and concern within the two churches.

Resolution #A030

Concordat of Agreement

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 71st General Convention of the**
2 **Episcopal Church call upon all members of the Church to:**

3 **a) Pray regularly and fervently for the unity which Christ wills for the**
4 **Church; and more particularly, for divine guidance concerning the proposal**
5 **to enter into full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in**
6 **America, as set forth in the *Concordat of Agreement* and its accompanying**
7 **theological document, *Toward Full Communion*.**

8 **b) Encourage study of the *Concordat of Agreement* at every level of the**
9 **Church's life, with particular attention to how full communion may enable**
10 **the mission of the Church, and with sensitivity to areas of dissent and**
11 **concern; in this connection see also the Lutheran-Episcopal reports,**
12 ***Implications of the Gospel* and *What Can We Share?***

1 c) Engage wherever possible in common study and partnerships in mission
2 with synods and parishes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

North American Anglican - Old Catholic Working Group

When the Polish National Catholic Church terminated sacramental communion with the Episcopal Church because of our decision to ordain women to the priesthood and episcopate, relationships entered a state of limbo.

A first dialogue took place in 1990 and a second in November 1993 at the Episcopal Church Center. Well attended, the meetings were characterized by warmth and cooperation along with a sincere but guarded desire to find ways to heal the breach between our two churches. Reports were given on the various dialogues in which the Polish National Catholic Church, the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Episcopal Church were involved. The Dublin Agreed Statement (Anglican-Orthodox) and the Old Catholic-Orthodox Agreed Statement were the focus of attention in the hope they might help to further the cause of unity between the Polish National Catholic Church and the Anglican Churches of North America. Pastoral tasks and responsibilities to each other were briefly discussed. Suggestions for the next meeting include: policies of eucharistic sharing as currently practiced by the Polish National Catholic Church, Anglican Church of Canada, and the Episcopal Church; and papers on the sections on ministry and ordination in other dialogues. Future agendas might include a study of the 1982 Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement and the proposed Lutheran-Episcopal Concordat of Agreement as model(s) for a closer relationship between our two churches.

Episcopal - Reformed Episcopal

An informal group of persons from the Reformed Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Church drawn from the Philadelphia-Baltimore area has met for several years to explore the possibility of a dialogue between the two churches. Discussions have dealt with matters such as authority, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, and the ministry in the Church.

The participants have now recommended a formal dialogue between the two churches with the following goals: "The goal of these joint discussions is to define the basis for a mutual recognition of our ordained ministries. In the course of these discussions, it is hoped that the entire ministries of the two churches will be examined, particularly as to how they derive authority from scripture, polity, reason, and tradition. It is also hoped that these discussions will promote fellowship between the two churches and provide opportunities for joint worship and educational programs. These joint events will foster and advance better understanding of these ecclesiastical traditions." This statement of goals for the dialogue was adopted by the General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church in May 1993.

Resolution #A031

Reformed Episcopal Church

1 Resolved, the House of ____ concurring, **That the Episcopal Church establish a dialogue**
2 **with the Reformed Episcopal Church, the goals of which will include the basis for a**
3 **mutual recognition of our ordained ministries.**

F. PARTICIPATION IN COUNCILS OF CHURCHES

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA

Resolution D128 of the 70th General Convention instructed the Episcopal Delegation to the General Board "to request an accounting of all receipts and expenditures, said accounting to include the following: (1) a listing of organizations outside the council, individuals, consultants, coalitions, programs, and entities to which financial support is given; (2) the amounts expended annually on these groups; and, (3) in-kind contributions." Accordingly, the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance of the Executive Council of the General Convention and its Audit Committee considered the annual audits and the statements of the receipts and expenditures for the National Council for the years 1990 and 1991. It was the opinion and recommendation of the Audit Committee that the professionally audited financial statements and the reports of contributions and expenditures fell within generally accepted accounting principles and more than satisfied the spirit and requirement of the resolution. These reports are available from the National Council or the Ecumenical Office. The Audit Committee and the Standing Committee urged the National Council through the Episcopal Delegation more fully to identify and communicate the many fine activities carried out by the receiving units of the Council and the ways in which contributions made by the Episcopal Church and other member communions are used.

National Council of Churches leadership has begun a further "transformation" of its mission and ministry, led by the General Secretary, the Rev. Joan B. Campbell. Included in the transformation process are (1) a three-year study of ecclesiology, (2) the Ecumenical Development Initiative for endowment funds, (3) the Cambridge Study to assess the Council's financial equilibrium, (4) proposals for an effective structural design, (5) development of a governance structure, (6) study of interpretation, education, and congregational involvement, (7) a look at broader ecumenical relations, including the Roman Catholics, Evangelicals, and Pentecostals, and (8) a study of socio-political relations within the nation and implications for an inclusive and just Council.

World Council of Churches

The Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order was held August 3 to 14, 1993, in the ancient Spanish city of pilgrimage, Santiago de Compostela. Delegates from the Episcopal Church were the Rev. Julia Gatta and the Rev. J. Robert Wright. As in previous world conferences, Anglican leadership was evident: Dr. Mary Tanner (Church of England), Moderator of Faith and Order, presided over the Conference and gave the opening address; Archbishop Desmond Tutu (Church of the Province of Southern Africa) and the Rev. Rena Karefa-Smart (Episcopal Church) presented papers at plenary sessions. Nearly thirty Anglicans from the Communion were in attendance.

A World Conference on Faith and Order had not taken place since Montreal in 1963. In these last thirty years, ecumenical relations among the churches have taken great strides, propelled by the Second Vatican Council and numerous bilateral and multilateral dialogues. Within the Faith and Order movement itself, we have seen the appearance in 1982 of the "Lima" Agreed Statement. *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, and in 1991, *Confessing the*

One Faith: An Ecumenical Explication of the Apostolic Faith as it is Confessed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381). The subjects of both of these studies accord well with Anglican ecumenical concerns, addressing as they do points two, three, and four of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral (*BCP*, pp. 877-878). In 1985, after careful and extensive study of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* throughout the Church, the General Convention expressed its "appreciation of the remarkable convergence displayed therein" and was able to "recognize in the text major elements of the faith of the Church through the ages, with certain reservations." Although *Confessing the One Faith* has not, unfortunately, been sent to the churches with the same request that accompanied *BEM*—namely, for an official response "at the highest appropriate level of authority"—the churches have been urged to use it "as an appropriate instrument for the process of better understanding our common faith, within and among the churches" (*Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order*, Faith and Order Paper No. 164, p. 15).

"Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life, and Witness" was the theme of the Conference. Delegates, who had been prepared for the work in Santiago by a discussion paper bearing the same name as the theme, heard papers dealing with the biblical and theological notion of *koinonia* and with the prospects and challenges of attaining it in a common faith, in life, and in witness. Smaller groups then considered these topics and drafted four section reports that have been forwarded to the churches.

Early in the Conference, Orthodox scholar and co-chairman of the International Anglican-Orthodox joint Doctrinal Commission, Metropolitan John Zizioulas, presented a paper on "The Church as Communion: A Presentation on the Conference Theme." Rich in its exploration of Trinitarian theology, this address offered insight into the nature of the Church that could help Episcopalians as we strive for unity both within our Church and with other Christians. For instance, as we seek to achieve a legitimate diversity within the bonds of unity, and to understand the relationships of bishops to their dioceses and to one another, Zizioulas said: "The most important condition attached to diversity is that it should not destroy unity. The local church must be structured in such a way that unity does not destroy diversity and diversity does not destroy unity....Here the importance of the ministry of *episcopé* becomes evident.... All diversity in the community must somehow pass through a ministry of unity, otherwise it risks running against unity....Equally, this one minister should be a *part* of the community, and not stand above it as an authority in itself. All pyramidal notions of Church structure vanish in the ecclesiology of communion. There is *perichoresis* of ministries, and this applies also to the ministry of unity" (Document No. 11, p. 5).

In 1997, General Convention will be voting on the proposed "Concordat" with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Some Episcopalians are concerned with the implications of this proposal for apostolic succession. Zizioulas, approaching the question of apostolic succession from the perspective of the *koinonia* of the Church, shed light indirectly on this matter when he maintained that "Communion with the Apostolic *kerygma* and mission is not just a matter of a chain of ordinations or keeping the Apostolic faith in its original form. Apostolic succession itself passes through the community of the Church (hence the requirement that all ordinations should take place in the presence of the community, especially in Eucharistic form); it is a succession of communities and not of individuals, and it is a succession that comes to us via the Kingdom as it is portrayed and foretasted in the Eucharistic gathering. It is in *this* way that the communities of the past

meet those of the present as well as those of the future. Without this meeting there is no true communion" (p. 9).

G. EPISCOPAL DIOCESAN ECUMENICAL OFFICERS

Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) is a network of episcopally appointed persons, ordained and lay, whose purpose is to nurture, celebrate, and model ecumenical commitment and activity at every level of the Church's life. EDEO was formally established twenty years ago at the initiation of diocesan officers and with the direction of the national Ecumenical Office. Working with the bishop and frequently with a diocesan commission, the ecumenical officer serves as a means of communication, education, and resourcing between the SCER and the local church. All but five dioceses have appointed ecumenical officers and during this triennium several dioceses appointed associate officers. EDEO renews the request of the General Convention for the appointment and support of officers and associate officers, one from the lay order and one from the ordained order where feasible. Representation from as broad a spectrum of the Church as possible is encouraged.

EDEO meets annually in the spring within the context of the National Workshop on Christian Unity. Besides attending to specific EDEO business, there are joint meetings with the Roman Catholic counterpart network, the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (NAEDO), and the newly formed Lutheran counterpart, the Lutheran Ecumenical Representatives Network (LERN). Additionally, the executive committees of the three networks meet together annually. Representatives from EDEO provide leadership for the National Workshop.

During the triennium the third EDEO-NAEDO Standing Committee completed its study of community and the process of reception which will soon appear in a volume titled *Receiving the Vision: How Serious Are We?* (Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN).

EDEO facilitated diocesan studies of ecumenical proposals, including *Churches in Covenant Communion* from the Consultation on Church Union and a preliminary study of *Toward Full Communion* and *Concordat of Agreement* from the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue.

A major triennial emphasis was preparation for the National Consultation on Ecclesiology. Highlights from extended discussions at an annual meeting concerning obstacles and opportunities for ecumenism and other information gathered through a newly instituted annual report were the basis of a presentation on "Local Experience of Ecumenism." The executive committee participated in the Consultation.

The first graduate level Ecumenical Institute for officers was held in Burlingame, California, jointly sponsored by EDEO and NAEDO and with LERN participating. Designed to follow up introductory institutes conducted in the past, this was an opportunity to explore ecumenical theology in the context of prayer, Bible study, meditation, and discussion. Leadership was provided by theologians and the national ecumenical officers from the three churches.

EDEO participated in a survey of inter-parish and diocesan covenants conducted by the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute. The results of this study and copies of covenants received will be kept at the Episcopal Church Center and at Graymoor and will be updated on a regular basis.

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

The executive committee is composed of the elected officers, coordinators from the eight domestic provinces, two at-large members, and representatives from the Episcopal Church Women, the Anglican Conference on the Religious Life, and the Suffragan Bishop for the Armed Services. Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute staff with responsibility for Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic relations participates. The work is accomplished with ten standing committees, among them EDEO/NADEO; EDEO/LERN (a member represents EDEO at the Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee); Interfaith Relations (a member represents EDEO at the Presiding Bishop's Advisory Committee on Interfaith Relations); Ecumenical Institute (training events); General Convention (hosts ecumenical and interfaith representatives).

A portion of the EDEO budget comes directly from the dioceses. Each diocese is asked to contribute \$200 per year and all but a few have responded. Of this amount, \$25 is returned to the province for work at that level. General Convention encouraged dioceses also to provide financial support for the work of the ecumenical officer within the diocese.

H. FINANCIAL REPORT

<i>Income</i>	1992	1993	1994
Appropriated by General Convention	\$38,260	\$31,130	\$51,620
Grant from General Church Program Budget for National Consultation on Ecclesiology			28,000
<i>Expenses</i>			
Meetings	\$38,593	\$40,375	\$16,649*
National Consultation on Ecclesiology			26,907
* Expenditures through March 1, 1994			

I. PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE TRIENNIUM

<i>Income</i>	1995	1996	1997
Appropriated by General Convention	\$60,155	\$74,995	\$41,574
<i>Expenses</i>			
SCER Meetings/Plenary (5)	\$22,680	\$23,247	\$11,914
Anglican-Oriental Orthodox (2)	—	2,315	2,372
Anglican-Orthodox (3)	3,780	3,875	3,972
Anglican-Roman Catholic (4)	9,730	4,987	5,112
Consultation on Church Union (exec committee) (6)	2,260	2,336	2,428

THE BLUE BOOK

Consultation on Church Union (Unity/Justice) (6)	2,260	2,336	2,428
Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee (5)	6,780	6,950	3,462
Methodist Episcopal-Episcopal (3)	3,780	3,950	4,069
North American Anglican- Old Catholic (2)	—	2,317	2,375
Reformed Episcopal-Episcopal (3)	2,325	2,383	2,442
Consultation on Concordat (1)	—	13,600	—
Study on Collegiality, Conciliarity, & Primacy (2)	5,560	5,699	—
Miscellaneous	1,000	1,000	1,000

Resolution #A032

Proposed Resolution for Budget Appropriation

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That there be appropriated from the**
2 **Assessment Budget of General Convention, the sum of \$176,724 for the triennium for**
3 **the expenses of The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations.**

APPENDIX

EPISCOPAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches
The Presiding Bishop

The General Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ, 1992-1995
The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning
The Rt. Rev. Craig B. Anderson
The Rev. Abigail W. Hamilton
The Rev. J. Carleton Hayden
The Rev. Barnett Jackson
The Rev. John Kitagawa
The Rev. William A. Norgren
Mrs. Pamela Chinnis
Mrs. Glennes T. Clifford
Ms. Sonia Francis
Dr. Alda Morgan
Ms. Cheryl A. E. Parris
Dr. Timothy Sedgwick
Mrs. Anne Shire

Anglican-Oriental Orthodox Consultation
The Rt. Rev. Harry W. Shipps
The Rev. John R. Kevern

The Rev. Mary June Nestler
The Rev. George W. Brandt, Jr.

Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation

The Rt. Rev. Frank Griswold III
The Rt. Rev. Frank J. Terry
The Rev. Paula D. Barker
The Rev. Ashton J. Brooks
The Rev. Charles P. Price
The Rev. Ellen K. Wondra
Dr. Marsha Dutton
Dr. R. William Franklin

Consultation on Church Union Executive Committee

The Rt. Rev. William G. Burrill
The Rev. Alice Cowan

Episcopal-Russian Orthodox Joint Coordinating Committee

The Rt. Rev. Roger J. White
The Rev. J. Robert Wright
Ms. Suzanne Massie

Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Coordinating Committee

The Rt. Rev. Edward W. Jones
The Rev. Rena Karefa-Smart
The Rev. Dr. Alfred Moss
The Rev. Dr. O. C. Edwards, Jr.
Ms. Midge Roof

North American Anglican-Old Catholic Working Group

The Rt. Rev. Harold B. Robinson
The Rt. Rev. David B. Joslin
The Rev. Canon Henry A. Male
Dr. Betty Jo McGrade