

MINUTES

Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee

February 4-5, 2002

Diocesan Center of the Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida
Miami, Florida

The following persons were present for all or part of the meeting:

Representatives of The Episcopal Church: the Very Rev. Donald Brown (*co-chair*) the Rev. Grant Abbott, the Rt. Rev. Leopold Frade, the Rev. Dr. Alfred Moss, Ms. Midge Roof, and Dr. Thomas Ferguson (*staff*).

Representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: the Rev. Dr. Duane Larson (*co-chair*), Ms. Terry Bowes, the Rev. Nancy Curtis, Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, the Rev. Norman Wahl, Bishop Ronald B. Warren, the Rev. Dr. Randall R. Lee (*staff*), the Rev. Jon S. Enslin (*consultant*).

Absent: The Rt. Rev. Carolyn Tanner-Irish, the Rt. Rev. C. Christopher Epting (*staff*), Ms. Emily Perow, and the Rev. Gregory Villalon.

The Rev. Dr. Duane Larson, co-chair of the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee, called the third meeting of the committee to order at 9:32 a.m. on Monday, February 4, 2002, in the conference room of the Diocesan Center of the Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida. He called upon the Rt. Rev. Leopold Frade, Episcopal Bishop of Southeast Florida and a member of the committee, who welcomed the committee to Miami. Chair Larson then introduced the Rev. Jon S. Enslin, interim director of the Department for Ecumenical Affairs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, who serves as a consultant to this committee. Dr. Thomas Ferguson, associate in the Office for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations of The Episcopal Church, also was introduced and served as staff from The Episcopal Church for this meeting.

Appointment of the Secretary *Pro Tempore*

By agreement of the committee, the Rev. Randall R. Lee, staff from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, was appointed to serve as secretary *pro tempore*.

Devotions

Ms. Midge Roof led "Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families" from the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Updates

Chair Larson called upon each member of the committee to provide an update on personal events in their lives. Many of the reflections were related to the terrorist attacks that occurred in Washington, D.C., New York City, and Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of June 4-5, 2001, in Salt Lake City, were approved as presented. A request was made to distribute the minutes via e-mail for approval prior to posting them on the website.

Website Update

It was noted that there was no news release from the June 2001 meeting. Plans are in place to provide the minutes of the meetings of the committee to the news bureaus of the two church bodies from this meeting. Discussion ensued on the presence of the church media at the meetings of the Coordinating Committee and the fact that the only official spokespersons for the committee are the co-chairs. Some members of the committee expressed concern that the listserv has not been utilized as some on the committee had hoped. The Rev. Nancy Curtis agreed to help facilitate people's use of the listserv. Chair Larson noted, however, that nothing official or formal can be conducted on the listserv because it is by nature a private medium and church policy requires a public forum for decision-making.

Updates on Cooperative Ministry

Chair Larson reported that a graduate of Wartburg Theological Seminary (Lutheran) in Dubuque, Iowa, was called to a cooperative Episcopal-Lutheran parish in Price, Utah, to which the committee was introduced at the June 2001 meeting. Dr. Thomas Ferguson distributed a document from Bishop C. Christopher Epting, ecumenical officer of The Episcopal Church, on continuing cooperative efforts between the church bodies coordinated by national and churchwide staff persons.

Discussion ensued related to the planning meeting of representatives of the ministry departments of the two churches scheduled for March 23-25, 2002, in New York City on the ministry of deacons and diaconal ministers, hopefully leading to the sharing of these ministries between the two church bodies. Grant Abbot stressed that the scheduled meeting is simply exploring the possibility of shared ministry and is not an attempt to force the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to ordain deacons. Consensus was reached that the ministry development offices should be asked to invite a member of the Coordinating Committee to be present for the consultation. Bishop Leopold Frade urged caution that this may set a precedent related to other meetings of staff, a concern echoed by Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl. Chair Larson said this is the kind of decision to be made on a case-by-

case basis and should be informed by the importance of the issue being discussed. Bishop Ronald Warren expressed concern about the possible fragmentation of the various groups making decisions related to cooperative mission and ministry, when, in fact, such groups might helpfully relate to one another. The Rev. Jon Enslin reported on the proposal to invite leaders of various churchwide units from all the full communion partner churches to a "summit" meeting for discussing how cooperative efforts can lead to fuller implementation of full communion. A grant proposal has been filed to fund such an event.

The Rev. Norman Wahl questioned whether the examples of cooperative ministry prepared by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and distributed for this meeting actually began only after the inauguration of full communion. Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl noted that the document indicates a large number of new opportunities that have been recently developed. She noted as well that conversation is being conducted by a congregation in the South Dakota Synod to be served part-time by an Episcopal priest. The Rev. Nancy Curtis said the document is too general in many places to be helpful. Bishop Ronald Warren said another issue to be discussed relates to the interchangeability of clergy because of the various ways such interchangeability is being fostered and implemented.

Report on LERN-EDEO Joint Meeting

The Rev. Jon Enslin commented upon the joint meeting of the executive committees of the Lutheran Ecumenical Resource Network (LERN) and the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) that occurred February 1-5, 2002, in Santa Barbara, California. He reported that he spent a significant amount of time with the LERN representatives discussing key questions that are designed to help set the agenda for the ELCA Department for Ecumenical Affairs as the search for a new director begins. In a joint meeting of the two groups, the participants discussed the recently adopted bylaw that allows for exceptions to ordination by a bishop in unusual circumstances in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (exceptions clause), and other issues that are arising as implementation of full communion begins, he said.

The Rev. Grant Abbott reported that the EDEO representatives discussed the issue of the exchange of deacons and diaconal ministers, the exceptions clause and the response of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations to that action, and the article by Professor Tim Huffman published in the January 20, 2002, issue of *The Living Church* on the full communion agreement. Fr. Abbott reviewed the history of that publication and the constituency supporting it, some of whom are opposed to the agreement for full communion. Fr. Abbot also reported that the EDEO executive committee endorsed a proposal to decline speaking invitations from organizations such as WordAlone if those occasions do not recognize that the agreement for full communion has been implemented or attempt to undermine the agreement.

The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee recessed at 10:54 a.m. and reconvened at 11:07 a.m.

Discussion of Commentary on "Called to Common Mission"

A first draft of a commentary on "Called to Common Mission" was presented at the June 2001 meeting of the Coordinating Committee based upon a request for such a document from the Grand Canyon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Responses from members of the committee were received in the weeks following the June 2001 meeting. A second draft was presented at this meeting for further refinement and endorsement. Several suggestions for minor changes were made for amending the text, which subsequently were incorporated into the text. Chair Larson was asked to reflect further on the commentary related to paragraph two of "Called to Common Mission" and Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl and the Rev. Nancy Curtis were asked to reflect further upon the commentary related to paragraph eight. Final discussion will occur later in this meeting on proposals from those three individuals.

The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee recessed at 1202 p.m. for a celebration of Holy Communion in the Chapel of Trinity Cathedral, followed by lunch, and reconvened at 1:28 p.m.

Role of the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee

Chair Larson led a discussion on a review of the Charter of the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee. Ms. Terry Bowes suggested that the Charter encourages a representative of this committee to be present at crucial meetings of staff, specifically when the meetings are related to ministry issues. The Rev. Nancy Curtis expressed support for this proposal and said such attendance by a member of the committee would help staff think about the larger picture by including intentionally full communion partners.

The Rev. Jon Enslin urged that a discussion of the word "assist" in the Charter be conducted, and said reaching consensus on the appropriate definition of that word is a concern expressed by ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson. A conversation about the definition of the word "assist" in this context began and resulted in a collection of the following words and phrases to further define the word: consultant or consultatively, developing a common mission directory, advocate for funding, help/carry, help units do better what they are already doing, coach, raise up, an assistant who knows the details, anticipating needs, spread the word, active involvement, lobbyist, proactive partnership, re-frame, initiate, cohere, and communicate.

Turning to the pattern for rotation of members of the committee, and after some discussion, consensus was achieved to suggest to the respective judicatories that people be appointed for one six-year term or to a three-year term, renewable once. Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl suggested that those presently serving on the committee be asked to serve for four years before term definitions and the staggering of terms are applied in order to give the committee members an opportunity to function effectively as a group. The Rev. Alfred Moss suggested that at least one-third of each delegation be under the age of 45 when appointed, and perhaps one of those could be under age 35 or 30.

Continuing to review the text of the Charter, the members of the Coordinating Committee expressed strong support for staff services provided to the committee to date.

The text of the Charter also defines the number of times the Coordinating Committee should

meet annually. Consensus was reached that the committee should continue meeting twice a year.

Turning to the issue of how best to communicate the work of the Coordinating Committee to the two churches, consensus was reached that the committee itself will issue a press release at the conclusion of each meeting. A public relations sub-committee of the Rev. Alfred Moss and the Rev. Nancy Curtis was appointed by the co-chairs.

Future Meeting Dates

After some discussion, consensus was reached to hold the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee in New York City from June 3-5, 2002 (beginning at 9:30 a.m. on June 3 and ending by noon on June 5, 2002) in order to become more familiar with The Episcopal Church Center. It was suggested that the meeting also include an opportunity to meet with the Rev. Stephen P. Bouman, bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in order to learn about the diaconal ministry program of that synod. Members of the committee urged that the meeting include a visit to the World Trade Center site and a meeting with representatives of those ministering to the bereaved and the caregivers in the New York area. Ms. Terry Bowes urged that the church press be invited specifically to this meeting.

Reception and Education about Ministry among Latino Peoples

The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee recessed at 3:00 p.m. in order to travel to the "Little Havana" neighborhood of Miami, Florida, to meet with church leaders in ministry to the Hispanic and Latino peoples of the area. A reception for Lutheran and Episcopal clergy and lay leaders was hosted by the Rev. Lenier Gallardo, pastor of Principe de Paz (Prince of Peace) Lutheran Church and an assistant to the bishop of the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Pr. Gallardo read a message of greeting from the Rev. Edward R. Benoway, bishop of the Florida-Bahamas Synod. The members of the Coordinating Committee were introduced to the discipleship ministry of Principe de Paz Lutheran Church, which also provides support and a parish basis for evangelism efforts in the Hispanic and Latino communities, as well as Lutheran Social Services. Appreciation was expressed for the agreement for full communion which already has resulted in a joint Episcopal-Lutheran campus ministry presence at the University of Miami. The Rt. Rev. Leopold Frade, a member of the Coordinating Committee and Bishop of the Diocese of Southeast Florida, expressed optimism that the coordination of new ministry starts among the Hispanic and Latino peoples, as well as the Haitian population, between the two churches will proceed quickly in the near future.

Tuesday, February 5, 2002

Chair Larson called the second day of the third meeting of the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee to order at 8:42 a.m. on Tuesday, February 5, 2002. Terry L.

Bowes opened the meeting with prayer and a devotion based upon the reading from the book of Ruth.

Discussion of Commentary on "Called to Common Mission" (continued)

Chair Brown introduced continued discussion on the commentary on "Called to Common Mission." Chair Larson read a proposed change to the commentary on paragraph 2 that he had prepared and which was subsequently approved by the committee.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried: To adopt the following text as commentary on paragraph two of "Called to Common Mission":

This paragraph defines practical and structural consequences of "full communion." Local and national consultation processes, which include hospitality and collaboration between each church's bishops, will express and extend Christian mission in dynamic and diverse ways. Our visible unity in evangelism, worship, and service will also honor the integrity of each church, building each other up in love as members of Christ's body.

Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl introduced proposed changes to the commentary related to paragraph 8 that she and the Rev. Nancy Curtis had prepared, and which was subsequently adopted by the committee.

Moved;

Seconded;

Carried: To adopt the following text as commentary on paragraph eight of "Called to Common Mission":

We agree to the common, though not necessarily identical, pattern of one ordained ministry shared between the two churches. The Episcopal Church continues the general, historic pattern of three forms of such ministry - bishops, priests, and deacons. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continues the pattern of one form of ordained ministry. Each church's ordained ministries remain governed by their respective church body. As we live into the common practices of ordained ministries of the two churches, though not identical, will allow the sharing of ordained ministers. Lay ministers and deacons are discussed in paragraph 9 below.

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The Rev. Jon Enslin urged that a discussion of the word "assist" in the Charter be conducted, and said reaching consensus on the appropriate definition of that word is a concern expressed by ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson. A conversation about the definition of the word "assist" in this context began and resulted in a collection of the following words and phrases to further define the word: consultant or consultatively, developing a common mission directory, advocate for funding, help/carry, help units do better what they are already doing, coach, raise up, an assistant who knows the details, anticipating needs, spread the word, active involvement, lobbyist, proactive partnership, re-frame, initiate, cohere, and communicate.

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These proposed changes were incorporated into the text of the commentary.

Discussion ensued on the proposed title, "In the Bond of Unity: A Commentary on 'Called to Common Mission.'" Several members of the committee expressed concern that a new title might be confusing in the long run to the entire process of reception of this agreement for full communion. It was moved and subsequently:

VOTED

LE02.02.01 To approve the text of "The Commentary on 'Called to Common Mission' Adopted by the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee, February 5, 2002," and to authorize its publication and dissemination in the two church bodies.

Debriefing the Reception and Education about Ministry among Latino Peoples

The Rev. Grant Abbot commented on the helpfulness of the meeting and learning about the vital ministry of Principe de Paz (Prince of Peace) Lutheran Church in Miami. The Rt. Rev. Leopold Frade commented on a number of cooperative ministries in which the two churches have been engaged, but he said that the "competitive" nature of the work being conducted by the two churches is quickly diminishing. Discussion was conducted on how the seminaries of the two churches could better prepare clergy and lay leaders to engage in ministries of evangelism and discipleship. Chair Larson said that learning how to translate seminary education to the training of local leaders is likewise a particular challenge, a point echoed by Ms. Terry Bowes. The Rev. Alfred Moss suggested that this topic continue to be explored at the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee in New York City. He asked specifically that representatives of General Theological Seminary (Episcopal) and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia address the committee on this topic. Chair Larson suggested that the cooperative program at the seminaries in Austin, Texas, would be more helpful location for such a discussion because of the intentional work they are doing in this area. Bishop Ronald B. Warren said that having the committee become missionally oriented is of particular interest to him as it helps to transform ministry.

Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl asked for discussion on how the visits of this committee to ministry sites develops a path to move mission forward. The Rev. Jon S. Enslin said that a series of paths may develop to stimulate mission and he observed that the gathering of people yesterday is likely to break open new possibilities for mission because they learn through such gatherings that there is permission to be engaged in joint ministries. Another path that is developing, he said, is the hoped for "summit" gathering of churchwide staff that is in the planning process through the ELCA Department for Ecumenical Affairs. Still another path, Pr. Enslin said, may be a joint gathering of bishops, either regionally or nationally such as occurred in 1996. Chair Larson said that this Coordinating Committee has a task of oversight, of "understanding the ecology," so that advice can be given to churchwide staffs about where best to devote their energy because investing in a particular place may bear rich fruit. Ms. Terry Bowes said she can envision that some executive staff

may be offended by advice offered by this committee so some clear ways to communicate such advice must be developed. The Rev. Grant Abbott said it might "be helpful to think of this committee as a scouting party." The Rev. Jon Enslin made the point that this committee cannot direct churchwide staff to do something, but staff are always looking for vehicles to help make mission and ministry happen more effectively.

Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl suggested that a communiqué be developed and addressed to the local bishops to encourage and nurture these ministries. Discussion ensued on how to communicate officially with the governing bodies of the two churches as a report on the work of the committee, particularly on the ministry sites that the committee has visited. Chair Larson suggested that the press release reporting on this meeting be written "with a human face" to describe the ministries observed, and which also could be distributed to national staff department heads. Ms. Midge Roof said a report could be made to the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church which is engaged in an evangelism campaign highlighting this work, demonstrating how a partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in this area can be helpful to them.

Chair Larson suggested that two persons be charged at the end of each meeting to prepare this kind of report, following some input from the members of the committee prior to the conclusion of the meeting.

The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee recessed at 10:05 a.m. and reconvened at 11:16 a.m.

Communiqué

Chair Larson asked for approval to appoint Ms. Terry Bowes and Ms. Midge Roof as the persons to prepare the report on this meeting of the Coordinating Committee. The committee asked that the following points be included in this report: (1) ministry site visit and the energy it instilled in the committee because it is a vehicle to advance the missional activities of the two churches; (2) adoption of the commentary on "Called to Common Mission;" (3) review of the Charter of the Coordinating Committee, particularly the principles related to the rotation of members and representation; (4) worship together; (5) update on the website; (6) request for a study on Confirmation in The Episcopal Church as it relates to confirmed Lutherans; and (7) report on next meeting dates and places.

Meeting Dates and Places

June 3-5, 2002 - The Episcopal Church Center, New York City - The goal is to carry forward the training for mission conversation begun at this meeting. Representatives from General Theological Seminary (Episcopal) and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia will be invited to address this topic. Bishop Stephen P. Bouman of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be asked to describe the unique deacon ministry of that synod, including a Hispanic deacon who leads that program. A site visit to the scene of the former World Trade Center and a meeting with those involved in cooperative ministries in the light of the September 11,

2001, attacks also will be arranged.

February 3-5, 2003 - Austin, Texas - continue discussion about ministry among Hispanic peoples, particularly as seminarians at the Lutheran and Episcopal seminaries in Austin are prepared for this ministry, along with the mission and evangelism program of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas.

June 9-11, 2003 - Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota - focus on mission opportunities that have been sparked by the work of the Coordinating Committee and others as the implementation of this agreement of full communion unfolds.

June 2004 - Chicago - to be scheduled in conjunction with the meeting of the Historical Society of The Episcopal Church, which will be holding a joint meeting with interested persons from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Anglican Church of Canada, and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Items for Discussion

Confirmation

Chair Donald Brown said that the issue is how Lutherans are confirmed and/or welcomed into The Episcopal Church and vice versa. Bishop Leopold Frade said that in some dioceses bishops will receive confirmed Lutherans as though they are confirmed in the Orthodox or Roman Catholic traditions. But the practice is not consistent across all the dioceses. Chair Brown said he thought it was inconsistent for Lutheran pastors to be able to serve in Episcopal parishes without re-ordination, while lay persons are re-confirmed in some dioceses. The hope was expressed that some guidelines will be developed to make the practice consistent in The Episcopal Church. The problem within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is how to issue a letter of transfer to people desiring to join an Episcopal parish.

VOTED

LE02.02.02 To request that the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations draft appropriate legislation regarding how confirmed Lutherans under full communion are to be received into The Episcopal Church, should they choose to do so; and

To request that the ELCA Department for Ecumenical Affairs discuss this matter and make the appropriate referrals to the transfer of confirmed Lutherans to Episcopal parishes and the reception of confirmed Episcopalians.

Items for Discussion

Bishop Elections and Installation

The Rev. Randall Lee reported on the installation of newly-elected bishops during the fall of 2001. The Rev. Alfred Moss asked whether the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will begin to keep records of who participated in the installation of bishops as is the case in The Episcopal Church, and whether bishops will be numbered according to their entrance into the historic succession. Pr. Lee responded that all bishops since January 1, 2001, have been installed into the historic succession but the only records that are kept are the date of the installation. The archives will contain copies of installation services, which will list participants in the services, but no other record is made, not is there any intent to number bishops as they are installed.

Ms. Midge Roof asked what would happen if a person was elected a synodical bishop and refused to enter the historic succession. Pr. Lee responded that the governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America state that a bishop must be installed according to "the rite of this church," which specifies that at least three persons in the historic succession will participate in the laying-on-of-hands. The ELCA presiding bishop, or a synodical bishop appointed by the presiding bishop to preside at an installation, could not participate if there was an intent not to conduct the rite according the rubrics of the "Rite of Installation of a Bishop." The Rev. Jon Enslin said he believes that this will become less of an issue as time goes on. The Rev. Norman Wahl and the Rev. Nancy Curtis commented on their experiences attending the installation of bishops in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod and the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, respectively, and on the differences in the ways in which the rite was conducted. The Rev. Jon Enslin commented that the installation of Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, in which the participants in the laying-on-of-hands silently prayed the prayer characteristic of the installation prayer in each person's tradition. Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl said that the experience of praying as those who individually participated in the laying-on-of-hands kept the installation from feeling like there was "a special moment" when the person became a bishop. Bishop Ronald Warren commented on his participation in the consecration of the Episcopal bishop of Atlanta, where he was invited to serve as co-consecrator of the bishop, which included signing the official documents of consecration.

Items for Discussion

Exceptions to Ordination by a Bishop

The Rev. Jon Enslin reported that to date no ordinations of pastors have been conducted without a bishop presiding at the rite, nor have any requests for an exception to this rule been filed so far in 2002.

Full Communion and Theological Education (continued)

Chair Larson said the conversation conducted earlier in this meeting about the missional character and formation of seminarians is a critical matter for discussion. The Rev. Jon Enslin said he has been made aware of how rarely seminaries invite students to think through the ecumenical movement and its implications for mission and ministry. Chair Larson reported that two of the eight seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America do require a course in ecumenical theology and others are reportedly looking to this Coordinating Committee to take an action requiring such a course. The Rev. Grant Abbott asked if the seminaries are equipped to teach students from other traditions who are preparing to serve in a setting of another church body. Chair Larson reported that Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, is beginning to develop policy and course work to address this concern. Chair Brown said that perhaps this committee needs to develop a recommendation to urge the seminaries to equip seminarians. The Rev. Grant Abbott made the following motion which was subsequently adopted by the Coordinating Committee:

VOTED

LE02.02.03 To request a report at the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee from the seminaries of the two churches on how they are assisting seminarians to prepare to serve in settings of full communion partner churches.

Items for Discussion

Study on the Ministry of Bishops

The Rev. Randall Lee called attention to paragraph 17 in "Called to Common Mission" which urges the two church bodies to conduct in concert with one another a study on the mission and ministry of bishops. He suggested that it might be helpful to initiate this discussion at the June 2002 meeting at The Episcopal Church Center where the Right Rev. Clayton Matthews, who coordinates ministry to bishops of The Episcopal Church, may be available to participate in a discussion of this issue. The Rt. Rev. Leopold Frade moved and the Coordinating Committee subsequently adopted:

LE02.02.04 To request that a discussion on initiating a study on the ministry of bishops in the two church bodies be included on the agenda of the June 2002 meeting of the Coordinating Committee in New York City, inviting appropriate persons from both churches to serve as resource persons for that discussion.

Items for Discussion

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

The Rev. Randall Lee reviewed briefly the history of the development of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC), a movement that began as an association of congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. With its incorporation and the development of a pension program, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ has recently declared itself to be another Lutheran church body in North America. Pr. Lee went on to report that some 48 congregations had affiliated with LCMC when it was considered an association of congregations. Since declaring itself to be another Lutheran church body, three ELCA congregations have voted to disaffiliate with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and join LCMC. At this time, the status of the congregations that joined the association of congregations is unclear and he suggested that synodical bishops likely will have to inquire of those congregations what their intention is. The Rev. Grant Abbott pointed to the similarity in the pattern of parishes leaving The Episcopal Church in times of controversy.

The Rev. Jon Enslin said another issue that needs to be addressed in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America relates to synodical and churchwide leadership. In the past, he said, such leaders were often the pastors of large congregations who were selected for service based upon their experience and expertise. Pr. Enslin said this is rarely the case today because that kind of leadership and experience is often rejected. He said he believes this is not a helpful development in the life of the church. Ms. Midge Roof asked whether this development is related to the rejection of authority throughout the culture. Chair Brown said he was not certain but that the problem also is a problem for The Episcopal Church.

Adjournment

The third meeting of the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee concluded at 12:55 p.m. on February 5, 2002, with a prayer offered by the Rev. Grant Abbott.