

Sharing the Gifts of Communion (Augsburg Agreement)

An Agreement of Full Communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria and The Episcopal Church.

Introduction

- 1 Since the 1970s, a fruitful partnership has been built up in Bavaria between the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, part of The Episcopal Church (TEC), and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria (Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Bayern; ELKB), which expresses itself in a consistent history of sharing in worship and prayer, and working together in diaconal projects.
- 2 Through this work together, Episcopalians and Lutherans in Bavaria have come to understand more deeply their shared mission and the bonds between their churches. Building on existing agreements between Anglicans/Episcopalians and Lutherans in Germany, North America and Northern Europe, TEC and the ELKB are now ready to move into a relationship of full communion, enabling full interchangeability of ministries and full participation in one another's mission.
- 3 This current agreement, made specifically between TEC and the ELKB, has been informed by a number of previous agreements between Anglican and Lutheran churches:

- the *Meissen Agreement* (1991), between the Church of England and the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), achieves mutual recognition of churches and mutual Eucharistic hospitality, but does not achieve full communion or interchangeability of ordained ministries;¹

and on the three regional agreements of (full) communion between Anglicans and Lutherans:

- the *Porvoo Common Statement* (1992/93), between the European member churches of the Anglican Communion and most of the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches;²
- *Called to Common Mission* (1999/2000), between TEC and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;³

¹ The ELKB is a party to the *Meissen Agreement* through the EKD.

² Neither the ELKB nor TEC is a party to the *Porvoo Common Statement*. The signatories of the *Porvoo Common Statement* are, from the LWF: the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark, the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, the Church of Iceland, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia Abroad, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania, the Church of Norway, the Church of Sweden; and from the Anglican Communion: the Church of England, the Church of Ireland, the Lusitanian Church of Portugal, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain, and the Church in Wales. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia has observer status, which is intended to lead to membership. The United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD), of which ELKB is a part, has the less binding guest status.

³ TEC is one of the signatory churches of *Called to Common Mission*.

· the *Waterloo Declaration* (2001), between the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.⁴

Through its membership in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the ELKB is in communion with the Scandinavian and Nordic Lutheran churches, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. TEC, the Anglican Church of Canada, and the British and Irish Anglican churches are in communion through their membership of the Anglican Communion. The LWF and the Anglican Communion are also linked through the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999) agreed between the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church, the substance of which was affirmed by the Anglican Communion in 2017.

- 4 In many parts of the world, member churches of the LWF and the Anglican Communion work in close cooperation, with or without an agreement, and the Third Anglican Lutheran International Commission urged churches to develop or adopt agreements that reflect this cooperation.⁵ In this spirit, this agreement is offered as a further example and invitation to other member churches of the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran World Federation to consider in their contexts how such a move forward could be accomplished.
- 5 Relationships between TEC and the ELKB have thus developed within the context of a long history of ecumenical dialogue between Lutheran and Anglican/Episcopal churches, which has shaped and enriched the experiences of many Anglicans and Lutherans. In particular, through *Called to Common Mission*, mutual relationships between the ELCA and TEC have become a lived reality. As distinctive churches with their own particular relationships, in making this current agreement, TEC and the ELKB draw on the extensive network of mutual experience of mission and ministry, as well as the experience of working and worshipping together locally. The purpose of the current agreement is to foster and deepen that common work through recognizing a relationship of full communion between TEC and the ELKB.
- 6 TEC and the ELKB have already taken important steps towards full communion. The 1987 *Niagara Report* of the Anglican-Lutheran International Continuation Committee and *Receiving One Another's Ordained Ministries* of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order (received by ACC-16, 2016), define stages of relations between churches. Relationships between the TEC and the ELKB have long-since reached stage 1 (recognition of one another as churches) and stage 2 (provisional structures exist which promote mutual growth). The intention in this agreement is to move to stage 3, the exploration of changing particular practices with respect to *episkopé* which will enable the full interchangeability of ministries, and stage 4, the public declaration and celebration of full communion.
- 7 In moving into this relationship, TEC and the ELKB understand full communion to be a relation between distinct churches in which each recognizes the other as a catholic and apostolic church holding the essentials of the Christian faith. Within this new relation, churches become interdependent while remaining autonomous. Full communion

⁴ Neither the ELKB nor TEC is a party to the *Waterloo Declaration*, but the purpose of the *Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Relations of Full Communion* is to link the *Waterloo Declaration* and *Called to Common Mission*.

⁵ *Jerusalem Report*, pp. 53.56 [Appendix 3].

includes the establishment of appropriate recognized organs of regular consultation and communication, including episcopal collegiality, to express and strengthen the fellowship and enable common witness, life, and service. Diversity is preserved, but this diversity does not divide and is not static. Neither church seeks to remake the other in its own image, but each is open to the gifts of the other as it seeks to be faithful to Christ and his mission. They are together committed to a visible unity in the church's mission to proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments.⁶

- 8 Specifically, TEC and the ELKB understand this to include welcoming one another's members to receive sacramental and other pastoral ministrations; mutual recognition and interchangeability of ordained ministries; freedom to use one another's liturgies; mutual invitations to participate liturgically in one another's ordinations and installations of clergy, including bishops; and the development of suitable structures for consultation to express, strengthen, and enable common life, witness, and service, to the glory of God and the salvation of the world.⁷
- 9 Such a relationship is based on:
 - a common confession of the apostolic faith in word and life;
 - the sharing of one baptism, the celebration of one eucharist and the service of a reconciled, common ministry;
 - bonds of communion which support the churches at every level to guard and interpret the apostolic faith, to teach authoritatively, to share resources, and to bear effective witness in the world.⁸

Signs of Communion that already exist

- 10 Lutherans and Anglicans recognize that they already share communion in the Triune God through their acceptance of the common gift of the Holy Scriptures; their affirmation of the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist as constituent for the church; their shared affirmation of the Apostles' and Nicene creeds; their shared traditions of worship, spirituality and theology; and their distinct but related experiences of the Reformation.
- 11 Anglicans and Lutherans both recognize Christ's church as "the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are rightly administered".⁹ Anglicans and Lutherans hold the ordained ministry of Word and sacrament to be a gift of God to the church, and recognize the necessity of structures of pastoral oversight and authority.
- 12 Anglicans and Lutherans have never condemned one another as churches. TEC and the ELKB now affirm that they recognize in one another the essentials of the one catholic and apostolic faith, to which their statements of faith witness, including the *Augsburg Confession*, *Luther's Small Catechism*, and *TEC's Book of Common Prayer (1979)*, and they affirm the substance of the doctrinal consensus articulated by successive international Anglican-Lutheran dialogues.

⁶ This paragraph adapted from *Called to Common Mission*, §2.

⁷ This paragraph is adapted from the *Waterloo Declaration*, §7, and the *Porvoo Common Statement*, §58(b).

⁸ These points are based on the headings of the *Meissen Agreement*, §8.

⁹ *Augsburg Confession*, art. 7, translation of the Latin text in Robert Kolb/Timothy Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 43. Compare also the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, art. 19.

- 13 TEC and the ELKB affirm the cooperation between Episcopalians and Lutherans in Bavaria, including the mutual invitation to receive communion, to share services and joint diaconal work. In the absence of a formal agreement, the provisions of the Meissen Agreement pertaining to ministry and worship have tacitly been taken to apply for TEC and the ELKB in this local context.

Ministry and oversight

- 14 The key question for this ecumenical relationship has been that of the theology of ordained ministry, and in particular that of episcopal ministry and its relation to succession. This agreement welcomes the consensus reached on this question through the *Porvoo Common Statement, Called to Common Mission*, and the *Waterloo Declaration* and affirms the theological contribution made by those agreements in moving towards a shared understanding. This agreement draws on those earlier agreements, as well as on further reflection specific to the relationship between TEC and the ELKB, to apply the consensus already reached to the specific situation in Bavaria, and thus to the German context.
- 15 Together with the *Porvoo Common Statement*, TEC and the ELKB affirm that “the primary manifestation of apostolic succession is to be found in the apostolic tradition of the Church as a whole. The succession is an expression of the permanence and, therefore, of the continuity of Christ’s own mission in which the Church participates.”¹⁰
- 16 Together with *Called to Common Mission*, TEC and the ELKB “acknowledge that one another’s ordained ministries are and have been given by God to be instruments of God’s grace in the service of God’s people, and possess not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ’s commission through his body, the church.” They agree that “ordained ministers are called and set apart for the one ministry of Word and Sacrament, and that they do not cease thereby to share in the priesthood of all believers”, and that these ministers “fulfill their particular ministries within the community of the faithful and not apart from it.” They recognize that “the priesthood of all believers affirms the need for ordained ministry, while at the same time setting ministry in proper relationship to the laity.”¹¹
- 17 Together with *Called to Common Mission*, TEC and the ELKB also affirm that “personal, collegial, and communal oversight is embodied and exercised in both [...] churches in a diversity of forms, in fidelity to the teaching and mission of the apostles.”¹² Together with the LWF’s 2007 Statement *Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church*, TEC and the ELKB affirm that in both churches, “Bishops are called to a special role of oversight in the church, but the wider community also is called to participate in oversight and to judge the way in which episcopal ministry is being carried out.”¹³ They acknowledge also that in some other churches of the LWF, and also some other churches of the EKD, those who exercise such “special role of oversight” are not referred to as

¹⁰ *Porvoo Common Statement*, §39.

¹¹ *Called to Common Mission*, §7.

¹² *Called to Common Mission*, §7. The terminology “personal, collegial, and communal” is drawn from the discussion of ministry in *Baptism – Eucharist – Ministry* (WCC Faith and Order Paper 111; 1982), §26.

¹³ *Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church* (The Lund Statement), § 50.

bishop, but rather, for instance, as Church President or *Präses*, similarly a Regional Bishop may be known as *Landessuperintendent* or *Oberkirchenrat*.¹⁴ TEC and the ELKB also recognize that this ministry of oversight – *episkopé* – is exercised not only through bishops but also through the synods and other leadership structures of the two churches, and that the relationship between bishops and these structures is an important aspect of the ministry of oversight in both churches.¹⁵

- 18 Together with *Called to Common Mission*, TEC and the ELKB agree that the historic episcopate “can be locally adapted and reformed in the service of the gospel.”¹⁶ Since the sixteenth century, the traditions from which both churches emerged have experienced both continuity and change in their structures of *episkopé*. Different practices of oversight developed in local contexts in response to diverse ecclesiological and political realities and theological understandings. Anglicans maintained episcopal-diocesan structures and continued to use the term “bishop” to describe these ministries after the Reformation. Lutherans in Germany provided *episkopé* by adapting existing structures, and described these ministries using a variety of terms, including “superintendent”, their preferred translation of the New Testament term *episkopos*.
- 19 The establishment of Anglican parishes on the North American continent spread steadily following the first recorded Anglican celebration of Holy Communion in North America in 1607 in Jamestown, Virginia. Prior to the American Revolution, representatives of the Bishop of London known as commissaries provided oversight in some colonies. In the context of American Independence from Great Britain, the first American bishops were elected, and in 1789 The Episcopal Church was constituted as a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction and as a church independent of state authority. From this time TEC has affirmed the importance of synodical government and bishops have been elected. The structures established in 1789 continue to the present.
- 20 General Convention, made up of the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies (equal numbers of elected clergy and lay people), sets the policy of the Episcopal Church. Its bishops are democratically elected by their respective diocesan conventions or synods and are answerable to the House of Bishops; they are to be servants of the church and not its lords. The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church is a member of the House of Bishops, who since 1926 has been elected by that House, with confirmation by the House of Deputies. A similar structure is mirrored in the dioceses, which have diocesan conventions (made up of the diocesan clergy and elected lay delegates), that work closely with the bishop. A bishop is elected at the diocesan convention by the clergy and lay delegates, and is consecrated only after confirmation of this election by a majority of TEC’s diocesan bishops and diocesan standing committees representing the whole church. At the consecration, bishops are consecrated through prayer and laying on of hands by at least three bishops, usually including bishops of the ELCA and other full communion partners, with the involvement of representatives of the diocese, both priests and lay persons, especially in presenting the bishop-elect for consecration, and in the liturgy.

¹⁴ The *Lund Statement* summarizes these roles as “episcopal ministers”; to avoid confusion, this present statement refers to “ministers exercising episkopé”.

¹⁵ *Called to Common Mission*, §7.

¹⁶ *Called to Common Mission*, §24.

- 21 The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria was formed in 1808 after the foundation of the Kingdom of Bavaria in 1806. The General Synod was established in 1848, initially sharing responsibility with the ruling (Roman-Catholic) Bavarian monarch who acted as *summus episcopus*, in direct continuity with the role of the late medieval German prince bishops.¹⁷ After the fall of the Bavarian monarchy in 1918, the ELKB (*Landeskirche*) was constituted, with a church president (*Kirchenpräsident*), who since 1933 has been referred to as bishop (*Landesbischof*). The bishop works together with the Synod (*Landessynode*, made up of two-thirds lay people and one third clergy) and its Executive Committee (*Landessynodalausschuss*), and also chairs the Church Governing Board (*Landeskirchenrat*), which is responsible for the day-to-day running of the church. Oversight is exercised through these four church-governing bodies. The *Landessynode* elects the *Landesbischof*. Regional bishops (*Regionalbischöfe*) or *Oberkirchenräte*, who are members of the *Landeskirchenrat*, share the responsibility for oversight in their episcopal areas or areas of responsibility through ordination and visitation.
- 22 Today, pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria are ordained by the *Landesbischof* or regional bishops. Ordination is a onetime act. Central elements of the liturgy are the prayer for the Holy Spirit, the laying on of hands and the blessing of the ordinand. The ordination rite provides that assistants say a biblical word of blessing and also lay on hands. These assistants are not restricted to the ordained, and may include (for instance) members of the parish council (vestry) or the candidate's family and friends. The installation of a bishop is understood as the installation of an already ordained pastor into a new office now with episcopal functions. The *Landesbischof* is installed by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany; the regional bishops are installed by the *Landesbischof*. It is good practice – but not strictly necessary – that at such installations bishops or ministers exercising *episkopé* in sister churches within the Lutheran World Federation or other denominations are present and assist in the laying on of hands.
- 23 In both TEC and the ELKB, these ministries of *episkopé* are therefore exercised personally, collegially and communally.¹⁸ Bishops share the exercise of *episkopé* with the synodical structures of the church. Ministers exercising *episkopé* constitute “a supra-congregational form of ordained ministry for the sake of spiritual discernment and leadership.”¹⁹ In both churches, clergy are ordained only by ministers who exercise *episkopé*: the diocesan bishop or *Landesbischof*, suffragan or regional bishops.
- 24 Together with the LWF's Lund Statement, *Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church*, TEC and the ELKB affirm that these forms of *episkopé* are intended to preserve the apostolic nature of the church and to interpret it for today. Through these structures of *episkopé*, the church “exercises responsibility for its doctrine and practices through open, critical deliberation and transparent ecclesial processes.”²⁰
- 25 TEC and the ELKB affirm also with the *Lund Statement* that a bishop does not exercise his/her ministry in isolation: “together with teachers of theology, pastors in congregations, persons called to a ministry of education and committed lay persons,

¹⁷ This concept of church government was known as the *Landesherrliches Kirchenregiment*.

¹⁸ See *Baptism – Eucharist – Ministry*, §26.

¹⁹ *Lund Statement*, §4.

²⁰ *Lund Statement*, §52.

episcopal ministers [i.e. ministers exercising *episkopé* – ed.] are especially called to judge doctrine in the life of the church, and to reject teaching that is contradictory to the gospel. The responsibility of governing bodies in the church (parish councils and church synods) is also to take formal decisions to ensure that the institutional, practical life of the church is in good keeping with the message of the gospel and witnesses to it.”²¹

- 26 In the words of the Anglican Bishops’ *Appeal to All Christian People* (1920), TEC and the ELKB affirm that both churches have maintained and been served by an ordained ministry truly faithful to the gospel, and that the ordained ministries of both churches have always been, and continue to be, “manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace”.²²
- 27 The four articles of the Anglican *Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral* (1888) remain the foundation for Anglican/Episcopal ecumenical relations. Anglicans and Lutherans have long agreed on its first three articles which affirm the foundational nature of Holy Scripture, the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist, and the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds. The *Quadrilateral* sets out as the fourth basis for church unity: “the historic episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of [God’s] Church.”²³ TEC and the ELKB affirm that in both churches, *episkopé* is exercised in a form that is congruent with this article.
- 28 With the *Meissen Agreement*, TEC and the ELKB “acknowledge that personal and collegial oversight (*episkopé*) is embodied and exercised in [their] churches in a variety of forms, episcopal and non-episcopal, as a visible sign of the Church’s unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry.”²⁴ However, the ELKB and TEC can go further than the *Meissen Agreement*: on the basis of the congruence in their understanding and practice of *episkopé* and synodical government TEC and the ELKB are able to enter into a relationship of full communion, with interchangeability of ordained ministries.

Continuity in the Gospel: Historic and evangelical succession

- 29 For both TEC and the ELKB, continuity in the proclamation of the gospel is of primary importance in establishing the apostolic character of the Church. This is preserved through “succession” However, the focus of the term “succession” is different in the traditions of the two churches.
- 30 Within TEC succession is understood as the orderly succession of bishops ordained by their predecessors as integral to the preservation of apostolic continuity in the proclamation of the gospel. This represents an episcopal tradition which can be traced to the ancient church, in which bishops already in this succession maintain the integrity of the faith by ordaining newly elected bishops with prayer and the laying on of hands.²⁵ TEC, like all the churches of the Anglican Communion, asserts that its bishops stand in historic succession understood in this way, through the consecration of new bishops

²¹ *Lund Statement*. §52.

²² Lambeth Conference 1920, Resolution 9.vii.

²³ Lambeth Conference 1888, Resolution 11.d.

²⁴ *Meissen Agreement* §VI 17 A.4.

²⁵ This definition is found in *Called to Common Mission*, §11.

through prayer and laying on of hands by at least three existing bishops. Acknowledging this background, Anglicans have still recognized in their previous agreements of (full) communion that the apostolic faith is preserved, not exclusively through the succession of bishops, but by the whole church, that is, also through the ministry of priests and deacons and of the whole people of God.

- 31 The ELKB understands succession in terms of the continuity of this apostolic faith, rooted in the proclamation of the gospel and supported by the ordained ministry. As expressed in the Augsburg Confession (art. 7), the Reformation emphasized the church as evangelical, established through the continuous preaching of the gospel and the celebration of the sacraments. This is the basis of the apostolic succession. The Augsburg Confession (art. 14) teaches that “no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless properly called.” Commenting on this, Article 14 of the *Apology* (1531) affirms the Lutheran commitment to “willingly retain ecclesiastical and canonical order”. Luther and other Reformers worked to ensure that structures were put in place to maintain the true preaching of the gospel and celebration of the sacraments. These structures have always included forms of oversight such as superintendents and visitations. Through and since the Reformation, this continuity in local structures has therefore been associated with a conscious conviction that apostolic teaching and faith must be not only rediscovered but also preserved. Those involved in oversight are installed through prayer and the laying on of hands.
- 32 Both TEC and the ELKB therefore recognize, as affirmed by *Called to Common Mission*, that in the context of the ordained ministry and the ministry of the whole people of God both churches “value and maintain a ministry of *episkopé* as one of the ways ... in which the apostolic succession of the church is visibly expressed and personally symbolized in fidelity to the gospel through the ages.”²⁶
- 33 In moving forward together, TEC and the ELKB commit to share an episcopal succession that is both evangelical (true to the gospel) and historic (true to tradition), including regularly a bishop of the other church to participate with at least two other ministers exercising *episkopé* in the laying on of hands at the ordinations/installations of their own bishops as a sign of the unity and apostolic continuity of the whole church.²⁷ TEC and the ELKB believe that the fullness of the apostolic tradition preserved in each church will deepen as a result of the relationship of full communion, through the shared ministry of bishops and presbyters and of the whole people of God.
- 34 TEC and the ELKB share congruent understandings of *episkopé*, but this does not commit the two churches to a unified concept of the office of bishop. TEC and the ELKB acknowledge that there is a diversity of how the office of bishops is lived out in each church. TEC and the ELKB affirm that the fact that the liturgy of introducing bishops into office can be understood as installation or as ordination, or that tenure in office may vary, or that the status of bishops when they leave office may differ does not hinder us entering into full communion.

²⁶ *Called to Common Mission*, §12.

²⁷ *Called to Common Mission*, §12.

- 35 In order to demonstrate more clearly the shared nature of the *episkopé* exercised by bishops, both churches commit to ensuring that at the ordination/installation of bishops, the whole church be visibly present through the involvement of lay people as assistants in the ordination/installation and to working to include in their installation/ordination rites an affirmation that the bishop will exercise *episkopé* in conjunction with the synodical government of the church.
- 36 Each church remains free to explore its particular interpretation of the ministry of bishops in evangelical and historic succession. This should be done in consultation with one another. Each church maintains and can enter into relationships with other churches, including relationships of (full) communion, which do not oblige the other church to engage in that relationship. That is, this declaration of full communion does not imply automatic communion of the one church with the communion partners of the other church, although each church is encouraged to seek communion with the churches with which the other is in communion.
- 37 Recognizing one another as churches that truly preach the gospel and duly administer the holy sacraments,²⁸ TEC and the ELKB receive with thanksgiving the gift of unity which is already given in Christ. Christians have repeatedly echoed the scriptural confession that the unity of the church is both Christ's own work and his call to all Christians. It is the task of the churches, and of all Christians, as well as Christ's gift. Every Christian – and every church – must “make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3), praying that they may rely upon, and willingly receive from one another, the gifts given by Christ through his Spirit “for building up the body of Christ” in love (Ephesians 4:16).
- 38 As TEC and the ELKB, we do not know to what new, recovered, or continuing tasks of mission this relationship of full communion will lead our churches, but we give thanks to God for leading us to this point, and entrust ourselves to that leading in the future, confident that our full communion will be a witness to the gift and goal already present in Christ, “so that God may be all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:28).

Actions and Commitments

- 39 We, The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, declare ourselves to be in full communion. Together,
- a. We commit ourselves to continue and deepen our common life in mission and service, to pray for and with one another and to share resources as appropriate in Bavaria, recognizing that TEC is a very small minority there. We encourage regular collaboration and consultation among members of our churches at all levels as appropriate.
 - b. We commit ourselves to offer sacramental and pastoral ministry to members of one another's churches.
 - c. We commit ourselves to receive those who formally leave one church to move to the other with the same status (for example baptized, communicant, confirmed) that they held in their previous church.

²⁸ CA VII; 39 Articles Art. XIX.

- 40 The declaration of full communion between our two churches implies the immediate recognition of currently serving bishops and pastors/priests of the one church by the other.²⁹ TEC fully recognizes the ordained ministry of bishops and pastors currently existing within the ELKB, acknowledging its pastors as ordained ministers in the Church of God and its bishops and regional bishops as bishops exercising a ministry of personal *episkopé*. Likewise, the ELKB fully recognizes the ordained ministry of bishops and priests currently existing within TEC, acknowledging its priests as ordained ministers in the Church of God and its bishops as bishops exercising a ministry of personal *episkopé*.
- 41 With full communion, interchangeability of ministries is given. We therefore commit ourselves to welcome persons ordained in either of our churches to the office of priest/pastor to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which are in force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination. We affirm that bishops may be invited to carry out in the other church, as appropriate, those ministries which they exercise in their own, such as confirmation.
- 42 We commit ourselves, as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church, to invite
- a. one another's bishops regularly to participate in the laying on of hands at the installation/ordination of bishops, with the expectation that a bishop from the other church will be present at the ordination of the bishop of the Convocation and the installation of the *Landesbischof*;
 - b. one another's pastors and priests to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of pastors or priests in one another's churches;
 - c. one another's lay people, including both those who share in the exercise of *episkopé* and members of local congregations, to participate in our churches' ordinations/installations in ways which celebrate the ministry of the whole people of God.
- Such mutual invitations are understood as a call for the deepening of the lived experience of our communion.
- 43 We commit ourselves also to continue our practice of inviting representatives of other churches, representing the worldwide church, to participate at the installation/ordination of bishops.
- 44 We commit ourselves to ensure that at the ordination/installation of bishops, the whole church be visibly present through the involvement of lay people as assistants in the ordination/installation and to work to include in our installation/ordination rites an affirmation that the bishop will exercise *episkopé* in conjunction with the synodical government of the church.
- 45 We commit ourselves to invite a representative of TEC to attend the synod of the ELKB and a representative of the ELKB to attend the Convention of the Convocation of the Episcopal Churches in Europe, and to keep one another informed about developments in our two churches.
- 46 We commit ourselves to establishing a small continuation committee which for at least seven years will undertake regular (at least annual) consultation regarding our relationship, will initiate further work as needed, and can be consulted should any questions or difficulties arise.
- 47 Each church agrees that the other church will continue its full communion relationship with all the churches with whom it is already in communion. We encourage one another

²⁹ Deacons are not explicitly mentioned in this agreement. The *Jerusalem Report* of the Third Anglican Lutheran International Commission concluded that the church's expression of its diaconal character is context specific, so that different understandings of and practices with relation to the diaconate are to be expected and are therefore not communion dividing.

to seek communion with these churches as well, but recognize that our declaration of full communion does not imply automatic communion of the one church with the communion partners of the other church.

- 48 We commit ourselves to work together to proclaim Christ's gospel through word and deed, and to further the unity of the whole of Christ's church, recognizing that entering a relationship of full communion will bring new opportunities and levels of shared evangelism, witness, and service.

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